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Nitish-Thulasimathi duo makes winning start

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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Waqf Bill Parl panel seeks public suggestions

Lok Sabha Secretariat has announced a call for public input on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024. The Joint Committee of Parliament on the bill is seeking written suggestions from citizens, NGOs, experts, and institutions. Those interested in contributing their opinions and suggestions can submit their responses in either English or Hindi. Submissions must be made in two copies and sent to the Joint Secretary (JM), Lok Sabha Secretariat, Room No. 440, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi-110001. Additionally, suggestions can be emailed to jpcwaqf-lss@sansad.nic.in. The deadline for submissions is 15 days from the date of the advertisement's publication.

3 infiltrators killed in encounter near Kupwara LOC

SRINAGAR, 29 AUG

Three terrorists are believed to have been killed in two separate anti-infiltration operations along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district, the army said on Thursday. Operations in the Machhal and Tangdhar areas were launched on Wednesday following intelligence inputs, it said. In a post on X, the Army said, "Based on intelligence inputs, a joint operation was launched by the Indian Army on the intervening night of 28 and 29 August in Machhal, Kupwara." *—PTI*

MLA Mukesh booked for rape, court grants bail

KOCHI, 29 AUG

A local court here on Thursday provided relief from arrest to rape accused actor-politician K Mukesh, directing the police not to apprehend him till 3 September. Mukesh, a CPI(M) legislator from Kollam, had earlier in the day, moved the court seeking anticipatory bail after the Kerala police registered a rape case against him on 28 August following a female actor's allegation that he sexually assaulted her years ago. Granting interim relief to Mukesh, the Principal Sessions Court here stated that the likelihood of the actor fleeing from the law is low. The alleged incident happened in the year 2010. *—PTI*

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INDIA GETS ITS 2ND NUKE MISSILE SUBMARINE

INS Arighat's commissioning will boost India's naval prowess

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

India's second nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine was commissioned into the Navy on Thursday in the presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh who said this will further strengthen the country's nuclear triad and enhance nuclear deterrence.

The ceremony for commissioning of the second Arihant-Class submarine 'INS Arighat' took place in Andhra Pradesh's Visakhapatnam.

INS Arighat is part of India's Arihant submarine plan, being developed and built at a cost of Rs 900 billion ($12 billion).

The commissioning of INS Arighat is being seen as a step towards boosting India's naval prowess and nuclear deterrence capabilities.

India's nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine SSBN (Ship, Submersible, Ballistic, Nuclear) programme is a closely-guarded project.

INS Arihant, India's first home-made nuclear submarine, was launched in July 2009 and commissioned in 2016. The construction of INS Arighat involved the use of advanced design and manufacturing technology, detailed research and development, utilisation of special materials, complex engineering and highly skilled workmanship, the Defence Ministry said. *—PTI*

INDIA'S POWERFUL NUCLEAR TRIAD

INS Arighat will join its predecessor, INS Arihant, to enhance the country's 'nuclear triad'—the capability to launch nuclear weapons from land, air, and sea. Here are some of its features:

- **6,000** tonne **Weight**
- **Max speed:** 22 to 28 km/h on the surface and up to 44 km/h when submerged
- 4 launch tubes in its hump
- Can carry up to 4 nuke-capable K-4 Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles with a 3,500km range, or twelve K-15 missiles with a range of around 750km
- K-15 can also be fitted with nuclear warhead
- Countries such as US, Russia, and China have larger SSBNs with longer-range missiles

Powered by 83 MW pressurised light-water reactors, allowing them to remain submerged for long time

INS Arighat was commissioned into Indian Navy, in Visakhapatnam on Thursday
PHOTO: PTI

RELIANCE, TATA RALLY

In a record high, Sensex hits 82K, Nifty touches 25K

MUMBAI, 29 AUG

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty hit their all-time high levels on Thursday, driven by a fag-end rally in index majors Reliance Industries and Tata Motors.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 349.05 points or 0.43 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 82,134.61, extending its winning momentum to the eighth day in a row. During the day, it soared 500.27 points or 0.61 per cent to hit a lifetime intra-day peak of 82,285.83.

The BSE gauge has surged 1,709.93 points or 2.12 per cent in eight straight trading sessions. Rallying for the 11th straight session, the NSE Nifty surged 99.60 points or 0.40 per cent to settle at a new closing high of 25,151.95. During the trade, the benchmark climbed 140.55 points or 0.56 per cent to hit a fresh record intra-day peak of 25,192.90.

In 11 trading days, the NSE Nifty has jumped 1,012.95 points or 4.19 per cent. Markets were back in action on the expiry day after range-bound sessions, as benchmark indices hit fresh intra-day lifetime highs led by gains in Reliance Industries, which announced a 1:1 bonus issue.

Reliance Industries climbed nearly 2 per cent after Mukesh Ambani, chairman and managing director of the firm, said the board of the company will meet on September 5 to consider issuing bonus shares in the ratio of 1:1. Among the 30 Sensex firms, Tata Motors jumped over 4 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, HCL Technologies, ITC, Reliance Industries, Tech Mahindra, Maruti and State Bank of India. Mahindra & Mahindra, Sun Pharma, JSW Steel, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Infosys and Tata Steel were among the biggest laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge declined 0.72 per cent, and the midcap index dipped 0.27 per cent. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

- In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge declined 0.72 per cent, and the midcap index dipped 0.27 per cent.

HC junks CBI's plea to probe DKS in graft case

BENGALURU, 29 AUG

High Court on Thursday held as "non-maintainable" a petition filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) challenging the Congress government's decision to withdraw consent to it for investigating a disproportionate assets (DA) case against Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar.

A division bench, comprising Justices K Somashekar and Umesh M Adiga, also dismissed the plea challenging the State government's December 26, 2023 order referring the Rs 74.93 crore DA case to the Lokayukta for investigation.

In a 67-page judgment, the High Court stated that the issues raised in the petition should be addressed by the Supreme Court.

The bench had reserved its judgment on the matter on 12 August. The CBI had earlier alleged that Shivakumar amassed assets disproportionate to his known sources of income between 2013 and 2018.

PHOTO: PTI

The previous BJP government had granted sanction to the CBI to prosecute Shivakumar, following which an FIR was lodged against him and investigation undertaken on charges of disproportionate assets. The current State cabinet headed by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on 23 November held that the previous BJP government's move to give consent to the CBI to investigate the DA case against Shivakumar was not in accordance with law and decided to withdraw the sanction. *—PTI*

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'QAZI CAN'T REGISTER MARRIAGE'

Muslim marriage & divorce registration must in Assam

GUWAHATI, 29 AUG

Assam Assembly on Thursday passed a bill to repeal a law to register marriages and divorces of Muslims.

Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Jogen Mohan on 22 August tabled The Assam Repealing Bill, 2024 in the Assembly to abolish The Assam Moslem Marriages and Divorces Registration Act, 1935 and the Assam Repealing Ordinance 2024.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma stated that the aim is not only to abolish child marriages but also to move away from the "qazi" system, where clerics register Muslim marriages. He said that registration of all marriages has to be done as per a Supreme Court order, but the state cannot support a private body like that of qazis for this purpose.

The British-era law allowed for the registration of marriages involving minors under specific conditions. The new legislation, the Assam Compulsory Registration of Muslim Marriage and Divorce Bill, 2024, will prohibit the registration of child marriages and ensure that all marriages are registered with the government.

"There is a scope of misuse by both authorised licensee (Muslim marriage Registrars) as well as by citizens for underage/minor marriages and forcefully arranged marriages without the consent of the parties," Mohan said.

Last month, the Cabinet had approved the Repealing Bill to abolish The Assam Moslem Marriages and Divorces Registration Act and Rules of 1935, which permitted underage marriages under specific conditions. *—PTI*

The new legislation passed on Thursday will prohibit the registration of child marriages
PHOTO: PTI

T'GANA CM FACES SC'S FURY OVER KAVITHA'S BAIL JIBE

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

The Supreme Court on Thursday rapped Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy voicing strong displeasure over his comments on the apex court granting bail to rival BRS leader K Kavitha in cases linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam.

In a media interaction on Tuesday, Reddy said there are doubts about how Kavitha secured bail within five months when Manish Sisodia, a former deputy chief minister of Delhi, got it after remaining behind bars for 15 months and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is yet to get the relief.

"Do we pass orders after consultations with political parties?" an ostensibly provoked Supreme Court asked on Thursday,

Angry over Reddy's statement about a "deal" between BJP and BRS for securing bail for Kavitha, the top court said such statements might create apprehensions in the minds of people. *—PTI*

K'taka Waqf vows not to accept Centre's Waqf Bill

BENGALUR, 29 AUG

The Karnataka State Waqf Board on Thursday expressed strong opposition to the Centre's Waqf Amendment Bill.

During a meeting of the Waqf Board's administrative committee, led by Housing and Minorities Welfare Minister Zameer Ahmad Khan and State Waqf Board Chairman Anwar Basha, a resolution was passed opposing the amendment to the Waqf Act, the Minister's office said in a release.

Subsequently, the Minister and Chief Minister's Political Secretary Nasir Ahmad submitted a copy of the resolution to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, urging him to write to the union government opposing the amendment.

The Waqf Board's administrative committee stated that it will not provide any information to the Joint Parliamentary Committee formed to review the Bill, the release said.

They pointed out that the Waqf Board was an autonomous body and the proposed amendment was against the interests of the community. They also suggested that the "intention behind the amendment might be different."

The meeting also recommended that the state government pass a condemnation resolution in the upcoming session and send it to the Centre. *—PTI*

PHOTO: SALAR

95% RISE IN WEALTH

Adani dethrones Ambani to become wealthiest Indian

MUMBAI, 29 AUG

Recouping the dent caused by the Hindenburg Research report, Gautam Adani's networth shot up 95 per cent to Rs 11.6 lakh crore last year, which helped him replace Mukesh Ambani to become the richest Indian, a report said on Thursday.

Reliance Industries Chairman and Managing Director Ambani's overall networth increased by 25 per cent to Rs 10.14 lakh crore, as per the 2024 Hurun India Rich List.

In 2023's report, Adani's wealth declined by 57 per cent to Rs 4.74 lakh crore, and Ambani was way ahead with a fortune of Rs 8.08 lakh crore.

Shiv Nadar and family of HCL gained one spot to be the third richest with a networth of Rs 3.14 lakh crore, while Serum Institute of India's Cyrus Poonawalla slipped by one notch to the fourth position with a networth of Rs 2.89 lakh crore. Sun Pharmaceuticals' Dilip Shanghvi secured the fifth richest tag against sixth last year with a networth of Rs 2.50 lakh crore. Radha Vembu of Zoho was the wealthiest among self-made women with a fortune of Rs 47,500 crore, while Zepto's co-founders Kaivalya Vohra and Aadit Palicha, were the youngest on the list with a networth of Rs 3,600 crore and Rs 4,300 crore. *—PTI*

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Gautam Adani and Mukesh Ambani

PHOTO: PTI

AKASA AIR GETS DGCA NOTICE FOR VIOLATIONS

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Aviation watchdog DGCA on Thursday issued a showcause notice to Akasa Air for "several regulatory breaches identified during a recent review".

A spot audit and scrutiny revealed that practical training sessions conducted by the airline were completed and simulated without the mandated requisite regulatory approvals, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said in a release.

The airline has been asked to give an explanation for the lapses within a period of seven days.

DGCA decided to place crisis-hit SpiceJet under enhanced surveillance that will entail increased spot checks and night surveillance to ensure the safety of the airline's operations. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

₹4 lakh collected in traffic fines on 29 August

BENGALURU, 29 AUG

In a special drive conducted by North Division of Bengaluru Traffic Police on Wednesday, around 831 cases were registered and fines totalling Rs 4.33 lakh were collected from traffic rule violators. The operation, which took place between 11am and 4pm, was initiated under the orders of MN Anucheth, Joint Commissioner of Police, Traffic, with the objective of curbing traffic violations and preventing accidents. The drive targeted a range of offences, including triple riding, using mobile phones while driving, riding without a helmet and driving without a seatbelt. Other violations addressed were no entry/one-way rule breaches, footpath parking and riding, wrong parking, refusal to go for hire, drivers without uniforms, demanding excess fare, and the use of black film or tinted glass on vehicles. In addition to enforcing traffic rules, the operation focused on raising awareness about the importance of following traffic regulations to enhance road safety across the City. *—Salar News*

CM: Balance equity with performance

Siddaramaiah meets Finance Commission

BENGALURU, 29 AUG

CM Siddaramaiah, DyCM DK Shivakumar with Chairman of 16th Finance Commission Arvind Panagariya in Bengaluru *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

Economically advanced States are committed to supporting poorer States, but this should not come at the expense of their own residents or economic efficiency, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said on Thursday.

In his address to Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission Arvind Panagariya and its members at a meeting here, he said the panel needs to carefully examine the impact of extremely high emphasis given to equity on the incentives of well performing states. "Moreover, the taxpayers of such states expect their taxes to work for them. This creates public trust. The Finance Commission therefore needs to do a tightrope walk while balancing equity with efficiency and performance," Siddaramaiah said.

Siddaramaiah requested the commission to recommend capping of cesses and surcharges at five per cent of gross tax revenue, and anything exceeding that should be a part of the divisible pool. He also requested the panel to recommend that vertical devolution should be at least 50 per cent of the divisible pool. All non-tax revenues of the Centre should be included in the divisible pool of taxes by bringing the necessary Constitutional amendment, Siddaramaiah said.

Due to the disproportionate weightage given to equity by 15th Finance Commission, Karnataka and similarly placed States ended up getting penalised for their good performance, both fiscally and demographically, the Chief Minister said.

Noting that cesses and surcharges are not part of the divisible pool, the Chief Minister said over the years, the Union Government has increased its reliance on them. This has led to the divisible pool not growing in the same proportion as the Gross Tax Revenue, he said. This has caused substantial loss to all the States. The loss to Karnataka on account of the non-sharing of cesses and surcharges from the divisible pool is Rs 53,359 crore during the period 2017-18 to 2024-25, according to him.

The Chief Minister said reduction in central financial transfers is limiting the ability of the States to invest in physical and human infrastructure. Karnataka recommends that 60 per cent of contribution of a state to the divisible pool should be given to that state, Siddaramaiah said. Karnataka requires greater devolution by Centre as it faces regional imbalances, especially in Kalyana Karnataka, and the challenges of urbanisation. *—PTI*

DA CASE

Victory for people and govt: DKS on HC verdict

BENGALURU, 29 AUG

DK Shivakumar *PHOTO: PTI*

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar welcomed Karnataka High Court's decision to quash a CBI petition in the disproportionate assets case against him, calling it a victory for both the people and the government.

"I have great faith in the judiciary, and I feel vindicated today. This is more a victory for the people and the government than a personal one. I would like to thank the government and my legal counsels for all the support," Shivakumar said on Thursday.

Shivakumar said the court's ruling upheld the government's decision. "CBI has to either drop the case or file an appeal in Supreme Court."

"They (BJP) had sent me to jail in the past under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. I had then said that I would get justice. The ED case against me was dismissed. I had contended then and now also that I have not done anything wrong," he said.

"Chief Minister did not say that the investigation should not happen. Case has been handed over to Lokayukta, " he said. He criticised CBI's handling of the case, questioning how they could claim to have completed 90 per cent of the investigation without even interrogating him. Shivakumar said, "A BJP leader had submitted an application in this case, and I have filed a defamation case against him." *—Salar News*

HC adjourns hearing on CM's petition challenging Guv's order

BENGALURU, 29 AUG

The High Court on Thursday adjourned to Saturday the hearing on Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's petition challenging the legality of the Governor Thaawarchand's sanction for his prosecution in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) case to Saturday.

The court also extended its 19 August interim order directing the special court for people's representatives that was slated to hear complaints against him in the case, to defer its proceedings till the next date of hearing.

Appearing for the Chief Minister, Abhishek Manu Singhvi made submissions. "Heard the learned senior counsel Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who has completed his submission for the present and would reserve his right of rejoinder submissions. Once the submissions are concluded by the respondents, the learned solicitor general (of India Tushar Mehta who appeared for the Governor) submits that the matter would be taken up on 31st (August), he would complete his submissions on the said date. List the matter on Saturday at 10.30 am," said Justice M Nagaprasanna.

On 19 August, Siddaramaiah moved the High Court challenging the legality of the Governor's order. *—PTI*

Old DC office in Mysuru to be made museum

MYSURU, 29 AUG

Deputy Commissioner G Lakshmikanth Reddy on Thursday directed Tourism Department officials to submit a detailed project report to convert the old DC office on Krishnaraja Boulevard in Mysuru into a museum. He was speaking after reviewing the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 scheme of Union Ministry of Tourism with Tourism Department officials at a meeting at his office in the City. The 129-year-old iconic heritage structure of the old Deputy Commissioner's office has remained vacant after the office was shifted to the new complex on Siddharth Nagar last year. The proposed museum and art gallery will showcase a total of 369 rare artefacts, including inscriptions, copper plates and coins, which are now with Department of Archaeology, Heritage and Museums, the minister said. The museum will also feature handloom products and handicrafts, Joint Director of Tourism MK Savitha said. Union government has sanctioned Rs 70 crore for promoting tourism in Mysuru city. *—Salar News*

Darshan shifted from B'luru to Ballari jail

BENGALURU, 29 AUG

Actor Darshan *PHOTO: PTI*

Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa, who is currently in judicial custody in the Renukaswamy murder case, was on Thursday shifted from Parappana Agrahara Central prison here to a jail in Ballari, amid tight security.

The 24th Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate court here on Tuesday granted permission to move Darshan to a jail in Ballari, after a photograph of him hanging out with three others, including a rowdy-sheeter, on the lawns of the Bengaluru jail had gone viral on Sunday, sparking an uproar.

The court has also permitted shifting of other co-accused in the murder case to various prisons in the state, and a few of them were relocated today.

In the picture, the actor is seen in a relaxed mood, sitting on a chair and holding a cigarette and a coffee mug. Also, a purported video of Darshan speaking to a person over a video call from the prison too had surfaced on social media.

He was taken out of Parappana Agrahara Central Prison in a police SUV and then moved into a police van near Chikkaballapur on the way to the district headquarters town of Ballari.

A Bengaluru court on Wednesday extended till September nine the judicial custody of Darshan along with his friend Pavithra Gowda and 15 others, who are accused in the Renukaswamy murder case.

Nine prison officials, including the Chief Superintendent of the Parappana Agrahara jail, were suspended on Monday over their "lapses" after a preliminary probe into "special treatment" to Darshan.

33-year-old Renukaswamy, a fan of the actor, had sent obscene messages to Gowda, which enraged Darshan, allegedly leading to his murder. His body was found near a stormwater drain next to an apartment in Sumanahalli here on June nine. *—PTI*

IN PRAYERS

The annual feast at St Mary's Basilica, in Shivajinagar, Bengaluru, started on Thursday with flag hoisting. The feast will conclude with the celebration of the birthday of Mother Mary on 8 September *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

SIT requests HC for in-camera hearing on pleas of Prajwal

BENGALURU, 29 AUG

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) on Thursday requested the High Court to conduct an in-camera hearing for the bail and anticipatory bail applications of former JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, who faces accusations of rape and sexual assault of several women.

During the hearing, Special Public Prosecutor Ravivarma Kumar, representing the SIT, sought in-camera proceedings to protect the identity of the prosecutrix. Justice M Nagaprasanna said a decision on the plea must be taken by the Chief Justice. Prajwal's legal counsel also sought more time. Consequently, the court adjourned the hearing to September 5, while observing that this was not a case where leniency could be granted.

—PTI

Bidar man kills woman for avoiding him

HYDERABAD, 29 AUG

A man from Bidar allegedly attacked and killed a 26-year-old woman from West Bengal here after she started avoiding him and later attempted to end his life, police said on Thursday. The victim was stabbed multiple times by the accused, police said, describing the gruesome attack.

The accused went to the woman's room on Wednesday late night and attacked her with a knife and also attacked three of the roommates when they tried to rescue her, a police official at Gachibowli Police Station said.

The accused, who earlier worked in Bengaluru, and the woman, who was a beautician, knew each other and were allegedly in a relationship, police said based on preliminary investigation.

The woman had subsequently shifted to Hyderabad and for the past over one month she had been avoiding him and he also suspected that she was "closely" moving with another man, and he bore a grudge and attacked her, the official said.

The woman, who was married, was staying away from her husband.

According to police, The accused, who fled after attacking the woman and others later attempted to end his life in the early hours of Thursday after climbing an electric pole and touching the high-tension wire near Moinabad and suffered burns. *—PTI*

Rain causes traffic bottlenecks in City

BENGALURU, 29 AUG

Waterlogging due to rains led to slow-moving traffic at multiple locations in Bengaluru on Thursday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

City witnessed widespread rainfall causing significant disruptions across various parts on Thursday afternoon. Many areas, including Majestic, MG Road, Jayanagar, Yeshwanthpur, Indiranagar, and Koramangala, experienced heavy downpours, leading to traffic congestion. The City also faced strong winds with speeds of 30-40 km/h.

Waterlogging due to rains lead to slow-moving traffic at multiple locations in the City, including the downramp, towards the airport flyover and the upramp towards Hebbal Circle. Hebbal police station also reported severe traffic delays due to water accumulation. Other affected areas include Marathahalli service road, Anil Kumble Circle, and the Outer Ring Road (ORR) between Silk Board and Karthik Nagar.

In addition to these key locations, the ORR areas like Kariyamana Agrahara, Kasturi Nagar, Veeranapalya, and Salem Bridge were also severely impacted by waterlogging.

Coastal and southern inland districts of the State also experienced widespread rainfall.

- Majestic, MG Road, Jayanagar, Yeshwanthpur, Indiranagar and Koramangala experienced heavy downpours, leading to traffic congestion

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a red alert for Udupi, warning of very heavy rain. Dakshina Kannada and Uttara Kannada, along with the inland districts of Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru and Hassan, were issued an orange alert. A yellow alert has been issued for Kodagu and Belagavi districts, where heavy rainfall is expected. Kalaburagi, Raichur, and Yadgir are forecasted to receive significant rainfall over the next few days. *—Salar News*

IN SECOND HOME

Lalbagh creator's descendant trails legacy

MEGHANA PRASAD
BENGALURU, 29 AUG

Alyia Phelps-Gardiner Krumbiegel *PHOTO: SALAR*

German botanist Gustav Hermann Krumbiegel is responsible for transforming Lalbagh into the lush, green marvel as it is today. His great-granddaughter Alyia Phelps-Gardiner Krumbiegel, a 55-year-old interior designer from London, has now embarked on a journey to preserve the horticultural legacy of her ancestor.

During her recent visit to Bengaluru, Alyia shared her deep connection with the City, her ongoing efforts to conserve its green spaces, and her reflections on her ancestor's enduring influence. Speaking to Salar News, Alyia said despite residing in the UK, she considers Bengaluru her second home. "Whenever I come here, I feel like I've landed back home," she said.

She has joined forces with a Facebook group titled 'Bengaluru Gardeners' to expand her reach and make a tangible impact on the City's environment. During the Covid-19 lockdowns, Alyia launched the 'Bengaluru in Bloom' initiative on social media, encouraging residents to create small gardens on their balconies and terraces.

- In her next visit to the City in 2025, Alyia hopes to collaborate with Lalbagh Botanical Garden authorities to create small lung spaces across Bengaluru

The interior designer has long-term vision for Bengaluru. In her next visit to the City in 2025, she hopes to collaborate with Lalbagh Botanical Garden authorities and activists to create small lung spaces across the City.

When asked about the challenges posed by modern infrastructure to Bengaluru's horticulture, Alyia didn't shy away from addressing the issue. "Why does every infrastructure growth have to mean giving up our heritage and horticulture, which cannot be rebuilt whatsoever?" she questioned. "To know our history, we must be able to see and touch it. We need to conserve as much of this horticulture as possible."

Alyia also emphasised the importance of international collaboration in enhancing Bengaluru's horticultural efforts. Reflecting on the legacy of her great-grandfather, who had initiated a seed exchange programme between local gardeners and international horticultural societies, she expressed hope for similar partnerships in the future.

—Salar News

State to launch e-portal to promote products by women

BENGALURU, 29 AUG

State government will mentor and financially support 40,000 women entrepreneurs from rural areas of Karnataka under its Swavalambane incubation programme. Since its start in October 2023, the programme has mentored 150 women entrepreneurs.

Under Swavalambane project, the government will also launch an e-commerce portal titled Sanjeevini to help market products made by these entrepreneurs, said Minister for Skill Development and Livelihood Sharan Prakash Patil during a two-day national conclave on rural women entrepreneurship incubation which concluded here on Thursday. The Swavalambane programme has been providing financial assistance through grants and soft loans to women entrepreneurs. The programme's mentoring sessions offer guidance in essential areas such as bookkeeping, financial management, business strategy, and establishing a presence on social media, which has helped these entrepreneurs broaden their market reach.

One inspiring example highlighted at the conclave is Jayasudha, a 40-year-old homemaker from Kolar. With a modest economic background and the responsibility of taking care of three children, Jayasudha once struggled to make ends meet. However, her life changed when she discovered the Swavalambane scheme. Through the programme, she produced and sold cooking and health products, reaching an annual turnover of more than Rs 2 lakh. *—Salar News*

KDA URGES MLAS TO ADOPT AND EMPOWER GOVT SCHOOLS

BENGALURU, 29 AUG

Kannada Development Authority (KDA) has called upon the 224 MLAs to adopt five government schools within their constituencies and transform them into model schools. In the letters addressed to the Speaker of Legislative Assembly, Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, Ministers, and all MLAs, KDA emphasised the importance of revitalising government schools. Speaking to **Salar News**, Purushottama Bilimale, the Chairman and President of KDA, said: "More than 45,000 government schools face infrastructure problems. There is a human resource challenge due to the shortage of quality teachers." *—Salar News*

300 additional forces deployed for J&K polls

JAMMU, 29 AUG

Over 300 additional companies of paramilitary forces deployed in Jammu and Kashmir ahead of the three-phase assembly elections commencing from 18 September in the union territory, officials said on Thursday. According to the officials, Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of the Jammu-Kathua range, Shiv Kumar Sharma arrived at the Police Reception Centre at Bari Brahmna Railway Station on Wednesday night to welcome the arriving forces. DIG Sharma assessed the accommodation facilities for the paramilitary forces and briefed the officers on the sensitivity and importance of their duties, emphasising full cooperation with local police forces, the officials said. —*PTI*

Centre to unveil simplified pension form for rtd staffs

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

The Centre will unveil a new simplified pension application form for its retiring employees on Friday, according to an official statement. The Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) had vide its notification dated 16 July, 2024 released the simplified pension application "Form 6-A", it said. "This form will be available in Bhavishya/e-HRMS (online modules) to all the central government employees who are going to retire in December 2024 and onwards. The retiring officials, who are on e-HRMS, will fill Form 6-A through e-HRMS (only superannuation cases) and the retiring officials, who are not on e-HRMS, will fill Form 6-A in Bhavishya," statement issued by the Personnel Ministry on Thursday said. —*PTI*

HC refuses to junk case against Tharoor over Shivling remark

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Delhi High Court on Thursday refused to quash the defamation proceedings against Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on a complaint over his alleged "scorpion on shivling" remark targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Justice Anoop Kumar Mendiratta dismissed Tharoor's plea challenging the defamation proceedings. The court, which had on 16 October, 2020, stayed the criminal proceedings against Tharoor in the defamation complaint, vacated the interim order and directed the parties to appear before the trial court on 10 September. Tharoor sought setting aside of the trial court's 27 April, 2019 order by which he was summoned as an accused in the complaint filed by BJP leader Rajiv Babbar. The criminal complaint was filed against Tharoor in the trial court by Babbar, who had claimed that his religious sentiments were hurt by Tharoor's statement. —*PTI*

'Jan Dhan Yojana a UPA-era scheme renamed by BJP'

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Thursday said the Jan Dhan Yojana was a UPA-era scheme that was "renamed" by the Modi government, and asserted that several million accounts were opened between 2005 and 2014. The former finance minister's remarks came a day after the government marked completion of 10 years of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana with Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailing the scheme. Chidambaram said the RBI governor who conceived of the idea was C Rangarajan. In 2005, when the 'No Frills Account' or 'Zero Balance Account' was rolled out, the governor was Dr Y V Reddy, he said. "Dr Reddy was succeeded by Dr Subba Rao. All the past governors deserve credit for introducing the scheme. —*PTI*

In a setback for YSRCP, 2 RS members quit

They are likely to join TDP

M Venkataramana Rao; Beedha Mastan Rao ***PHOTOS: FB***

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Two YSRCP members of Rajya Sabha- Beedha Mastan Rao Jadhav and Venkataramana Rao Mopidevi have tendered their resignation from House membership and one of them might join Telugu Desam Party (TDP), Parliamentary sources said on Thursday.

They said Vice President and Chairman of Rajya Sabha Jagdeep Dhankhar has accepted their resignation. Mastan Rao, whose term was to end in June 2028, had switched from the TDP to the Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP). He is likely to go back to TDP.

Mopidevi, whose term was till June 2026, may also join the TDP, the sources said. Following the two resignations, the strength of the YSRCP in the Upper House of Parliament has dipped from 11 to nine.

TDP, which is a key NDA partner, has no representation in the Rajya Sabha. It has been learnt that Mastan Rao could be fielded by the TDP in the bypoll, but Mopidevi is not keen on entering the Rajya Sabha again.

In the resultant bypolls, TDP could get seats in Rajya Sabha. As a result, ruling NDA will have two more members on its side. Besides TDP, the BJP's allies in the Upper House include JD(U), NCP, JD(S), RPI(A), Shiv Sena, RLD, RLM, NPP, PMK, Taamil Manila Congress and UPPL.

The bypolls also helped the ruling NDA to cross the majority mark in Rajya Sabha with the help of six nominated MPs. NDA has the support of 121 MPs in a House of 237. With two more MPs all set to return to the House from TDP-led alliance, the NDA would further increase its tally. —*PTI*

Journalists booked over plaint by Suresh Gopi

THRISSUR, 29 AUG

A case has been registered against media persons following a complaint lodged by Union Minister Suresh Gopi alleging that the journalists blocked his way when he exited the Thrissur Ramanilayam government guest house.

The case was registered on Wednesday night under sections 329(3),126(2),132 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), police said. While Section 329(3) of the BNS deals with trespass, 126(2) deals with wrongful restraint, and 132 deals with assault or criminal force to deter a public servant from discharge of his duty.

According to the FIR, the reporters trespassed and blocked Gopi from entering his vehicle and obstructed the duty of his security officer. On Tuesday, when Gopi, the first BJP Lok Sabha MP from Kerala, was asked by reporters about the allegations of sexual harassment against CPI(M) MLA M Mukesh, he replied, "Media are not only making people fight each other for your own gains, you are also misleading public idea." —*PTI*

KANGANA MEETS NADDA AFTER SNUB OVER HER REMARKS

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Days after she was reprimanded for her controversial remarks on the farmers' protest, BJP MP Kangana Ranaut met party President JP Nadda at his residence here on Thursday.

This is the second time that Ranaut has met Nadda since she stirred controversy earlier this week with her disparaging remarks on the farmers' agitation against the now-repealed three-farm laws.

She had on Monday posted a clip of her interview with Hindi daily Dainik Bhaskar in which she suggested that a "Bangladesh-like situation" could have erupted in India but for the country's strong leadership. She then alleged that "bodies were hanging and rapes were taking place" during the protest. —*PTI*

BHARAT DOJO YATRA

On National Sports Day, Congress party shared a video on X, showing Opposition leader Rahul Gandhi showing off his Jiu-Jitsu skills during Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra. He aimed to equip children with the martial art ***PHOTO: PTI***

KOLKATA RAPE-MURDER

Leaked audio clips spark fresh row

Women participate in a rally to protest against the alleged rape and murder of a resident doctor, in Kolkata on Thursday ***PHOTO: PTI***

KOLKATA, 29 AUG

Three purported audio recordings of phone calls, allegedly made by RG Kar Medical College authorities on 9 August morning to the parents of the rape-murder victim asking them to report to the hospital, hit the public domain on Thursday and sparked a fresh controversy over "insensitivity" and "disinformation" of the institute's management in breaking bad news.

The changes in statements on the status of the victim made by an official in those phone calls, whose authenticity PTI has not individually verified, raise questions on whether the hospital was initially trying to cover up the ghastly crime. The caller, a woman who identified herself as the assistant superintendent of the hospital, reportedly dialed the parents of the victim from the same number thrice within a span of around 30 minutes asking their urgent presence at the facility.

"I am calling from RG Kar hospital. Can you come over immediately?" the caller could be heard telling the victim's father when he picked his phone the first time around 10.53 that morning. The father responded, "Why? What has happened?" To this, the caller replied, "Your daughter has fallen a little ill. We are admitting her in the hospital. Can you come down quickly?"

When the parent insisted on more details, the caller was heard saying, "Those details only doctors can provide. We only managed to find your number and call you. Please come down quickly. The patient has been admitted after falling ill." The call lasted for a minute and 11 seconds. —*PTI*

WB to hold spl session to pass anti-rape Bill

KOLKATA, 29 AUG

A two-day special session of the West Bengal Assembly was convened by the government on 2 September to table and pass a Bill which would provide for capital punishment to convicted rapists, Parliamentary Affairs minister Sovandeb Chattopadhyay said.

The Bill would be tabled for discussion and passage on Tuesday, the second day of the special session, Speaker Biman Banerjee said. The move came a day after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced that an amendment to existing laws will be passed in the state assembly next week to ensure capital punishment for convicted rapists.

"I am not aware of the title of the Bill yet. But it will be tabled on Tuesday for discussion and passage by members. So far we are convening a two-day special session which could be extended if additional businesses for the House are included later," Banerjee said.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday asserted that she did not threaten junior doctors at state-run hospitals, who have been continuing cease-work for 21 days now to protest against the alleged rape and murder of a woman medic. Mamata said accusations that have come from certain quarters of her threatening the agitating junior doctors are "completely false" and part of a "malicious disinformation campaign".

Sovandeb Chattopadhyay ***PHOTO: PTi***

- The move came a day after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced that an amendment to existing laws will be passed in the state assembly next week to ensure capital punishment for convicted rapists

Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi slammed his West Bengal counterpart Mamata Banerjee for allegedly making "negative" and "hateful" comments on the coastal state. Referring to the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor in a Kolkata hospital, Majhi also alleged that Banerjee was making "vindictive" comments "without giving justice to the victim of the heinous crime".

Congress, the fans of arch-rival clubs Mohun Bagan, East Bengal and Mohammedan Sporting, and several civil society organisations organised separate processions to denounce the crime that has sparked nationwide outrage. —*PTI*

'CAN'T DISBELEIVE OFFICERS'

SC to appoint prosecutor in Revanth's cash-for-vote scam case

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Supreme Court on Thursday said it will appoint a special prosecutor to conduct trial in the 2015 cash-for-vote scam case in which Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy is an accused.

The top court was hearing a petition seeking transfer of the trial in the case from the state to Bhopal.

A bench of Justices BR Gavai, PK Mishra and KV Viswanathan said it will consult colleagues from Telangana and pass an order at 2 pm.

PHOTO: PTI

At the outset, senior advocate C Aryama Sundaram, appearing for Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) MLA Guntakandla Jagadish Reddy and three others, sought transfer of trial saying the Revanth has been publicly making statements on the case.

"Only on apprehension, how can we entertain such petitions...If we entertain such petitions, we will be disbelieving our judicial officers," the bench observed. Sundaram submitted that Telangana Chief Minister is himself the Home Minister. "There is a rule of natural justice that no person should be a judge in his own cause," he said. The bench then said it will pass orders to appoint an independent public prosecutor to inspire confidence. —*PTI*

B'desh leader's body found in Meghalaya

SHILLONG, 29 AUG

The Meghalaya Police recovered the decomposed body of Awami League leader Ishaque Ali Khan Panna from a betelnut plantation in Jaintia Hills district bordering Bangladesh, officials said.

The body was discovered on 26 August evening, around 1.5 km from the IndiA-Bangladesh border, they said.

SP Giri Prasad said Panna was identified through his passport. Panna, a former general secretary of Bangladesh Chhatra League and a prominent member of the Awami League from Pirojpur district in the neighbouring country, had been on the run following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government on 5 August, sources said.

Ishaque Ali Khan ***PHOTO: PTi***

Initial the reports suggested that Panna might have suffered a cardiac arrest while trying to cross the border. —*PTI*

HC ADMONISHES BRIJ BHUSHAN SINGH OVER PLEA

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Delhi High Court on Thursday refused to grant relief to Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, the former president of the Wrestling Federation of India, who had sought to quash the charges and proceedings in the wrestlers' sexual harassment case.

Singh had filed a plea requesting the dismissal of the FIR and the charges framed against him by six women wrestlers

The bench, led by Justice Neena Bansal, criticised Singh's approach, labelling the plea as an "oblique way" of challenging the proceedings. —*PTI*

BUILD NEW ONE

Govt panel to probe Shivaji statue's collapse

MUMBAI, 29 AUG

Maharashtra Government set up a technical committee comprising engineers, IIT experts and Navy officials to probe the reasons behind the collapse of Shivaji Maharaj statue at Malvan in coastal Konkan inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, an official said on Thursday.

A release issued by the Chief Minister's office said the government has constituted a committee to build a "grand statute befitting the stature" of the warrior king.

An FIR has been registered against the contractor of the 35-foot statue which collapsed on Monday just eight months after it was unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 4 December.

The FIR follows a complaint by the Public Works Department, which claims the statue's construction was of poor quality, and the nuts and bolts used in the structure were found to be rusted. However, a structural engineer named in the case claimed that he was not the structural consultant for the project.

FIR has been registered against the contractor of the 35-foot statue which collapsed ***PHOTO: PTI***

Meanwhile, Indian Navy said it conceptualised and steered the project of installing the Shivaji statue in coordination with the state government, which also provided funding for it. This was after the state government blamed the Navy for the fiasco saying that the structure was designed and built by it.

Corroded nuts and bolts likely contributed to the collapse of the Shivaji statue by causing a failure in steel members forming the frame inside the statue, according to a structural engineer. A joint technical committee headed by Indian Navy officials, representatives of the state government and technical experts is being formed to probe the collapse of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's statue in Malvan, the Navy said.

The Navy said the statue was unveiled as part of the Navy Day celebrations, held for the first time in Sindhudurg, aimed at honouring the legacy of the "Maratha Navy" and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj towards maritime defence and security, and its historical linkage with the modern Indian Navy. —*PTI*

Pak invites Modi to attend SCO meeting in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD, 29 AUG

Pakistan has invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation heads of government meeting being organised here in October, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said here on Thursday. During a weekly press briefing, the Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that invitations have been sent to the heads of countries to participate in the meeting which will take place on October 15-16, the Dawn newspaper reported.

"An invitation has also been sent to the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi," Baloch was quoted as saying in the report. Baloch said some countries had already confirmed participation in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) heads of government meeting. "It will be informed in due course which country has confirmed," she added.

Islamabad and New Delhi have a long history of strained relations, primarily due to the Kashmir issue as well as the cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan.

India has been maintaining that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan while insisting that the onus is on Islamabad to create an environment that is free of terror and hostility for such an engagement.

The SCO, comprising India, China, Russia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, is an influential economic and security bloc that has emerged as one of the largest transregional international organisations. When asked about ties with India, the spokesperson said, "Pakistan does not have direct bilateral trade with India." —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Menstruating teen dies after overdose of painkillers

TRICHY, 29 AUG

An 18-year-old girl from a village near Musiri died after consuming an excessive amount of medication to alleviate her menstrual cramps. The incident occurred in the Pulivalam area of Trichy on 21 August. According to reports, the girl, who was preparing to pursue engineering, had a history of severe menstrual pain. On the day of the incident, she experienced intense abdominal pain during her menstrual cycle. In an attempt to manage the pain, she took too many pills. Shortly after, she began to experience vomiting and lost consciousness. Her parents rushed her to the primary health center in Omandhur, where she received initial treatment and was subsequently discharged. However, her condition deteriorated and she was admitted again. Despite receiving intensive medical care, she died on Monday.
—Agencies

HC extends relief for Khedkar from arrest till 5 Sept

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Delhi High Court on Thursday extended till 5 September the interim protection from arrest granted to former IAS probationer Puja Khedkar, who has been accused of cheating and wrongly availing OBC and disability quota benefits. Justice Subramonium Prasad deferred hearing on the anticipatory bail plea by Khedkar till then and granted liberty to the police to file a fresh status report in the meantime. Both the UPSC and the Delhi Police have sought dismissal of her plea for pre-arrest bail. In a rejoinder filed to the stand of the authorities, Khedkar has denied the allegations levelled against her and asserted that she has neither misrepresented nor cheated. *—PTI*

3 Naxalites killed in Chhattisgarh encounter

NARAYANPUR, 29 AUG

Three women Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security personnel in Narayanpur district of Chhattisgarh on Thursday, a senior police official said. The gunfight broke out at around 8 am in the forest of Abhujmaad located on the border of Narayanpur and Kanker districts when a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxal operation, he said. The personnel belonging to the Special Task Force (STF), District Reserve Guard (DRG) and Border Security Force (BSF) were involved in the operation which was launched based on inputs about the presence of Naxalites in the area, he said. So far, bodies of three women Naxalites clad in 'uniform' along with a huge cache of weapons were recovered from the spot, the police official said.
—PTI

UP doctor booked for molesting girl in hospital

MUZAFFARNAGAR, 29 AUG

A doctor of a private hospital here has been booked for allegedly molesting a 17-year-old girl, police said on Thursday. In their police complaint, lodged on Wednesday, her family members alleged that the incident took place on August 17 at the health facility where she was admitted for a surgery, Superintendent of Police (SP) Satyanarain Prajapati said. The doctor has been charged under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, the official said. The SP said a search has been launched to trace the accused. In the police complaint, it is alleged that the doctor, who was on a routine round of a ward, entered a room where the girl was resting after a surgery and molested her, the official said. *—PTI*

Actors Mukesh, Jayasurya booked for rape

Leaders from ruling coalition, Opposition called for Mukesh to step down as CPI(M) MLA

T'PURAM/KOCHI, 29 AUG

Well-known names of Malayalam cinema, including CPI (M) MLA K Mukesh, Jayasurya and Maniyanpilla Raju have been booked by the police for rape and sexual assault of a woman colleague, prompting voices from the ruling coalition on Thursday for the former to step down as a legislator amid an intensifying political slugfest involving the LDF and the opposition.

Senior CPI leader Annie Raja urged Mukesh to step down as an MLA, after he was booked for rape on Wednesday night. Amid Congress' attack, the CPI (M)-led LDF threw its weight behind Mukesh.

MLA K Mukesh and Jayasurya and Maniyanpilla Raju were booked by Kochi police for rape and sexual assault of a woman colleague *PHOTO: PTI*

The complainant also levelled allegations against small-time actor Idavela Babu who held a prominent role in the actors' association.

In a Facebook post, the woman actor said, "I am writing to report a series of incidents of physical and verbal abuse I suffered at the hands of 1 Mukesh 2 Maniyan Pilla Raju, 3 Idavela Babu, 4 Jayasoorya (Jayasurya), 5 adv Chandrasekaran, 6 production controller Noble and Vichu, in the Malayalam film industry."

"In 2013, I was subjected to physical and verbal abuse by these individuals while working on a project. I tried to cooperate and continue working, but the abuse became unbearable," the actress alleged.

Annie said if Mukesh does not resign as MLA, the state government's "sincere and honest" efforts would be hampered. "It will also affect the image of the state government. The Left front is pro-women," she added. With its MLA coming under intense opposition attack, the LDF pointed out that Congress MLAs who faced rape charges had not resigned.

LDF convener E P Jayarajan also said that neither the CPI(M) nor the Left government will protect any wrongdoers.

An FIR under IPC 376 (rape) was registered against Mukesh at Maradu police station in Kochi.

The case was registered under the IPC as the offence occurred before Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita came into force.

Earlier, actor Sidhique was booked for allegedly raping an actress in a hotel eight years ago. The Justice Hema Committee was constituted by the Kerala government after the 2017 actress assault case and its report revealed instances of harassment and exploitation of women in the Malayalam cinema industry.
—PTI

If Mukesh has committed a crime, then he is not eligible to continue in that position. But, right now we are in the initial stages of the investigation and we cannot say whether he should resign or not

KK Shailaja, CPI(M) legislator

Floods: Tripura declared natural calamity hit

An army personnel carries a child during a rescue operation of stranded people following heavy rainfall in Gujarat's Rajkot and Dwarka area,; A crocodile seen on the roof of a partially submerged house following heavy rainfall, in Vadodara, on Thursday

PHOTOS: PTI

AGARTALA, 29 AUG

The Tripura government has declared the entire state as natural calamity-affected area following unprecedented floods causing loss of human lives and extensive damage to properties, an official said on Thursday.

The state has witnessed unprecedented floods, causing loss of human lives and extensive damage, destruction and loss of both public and private infrastructures and properties.

"At least 31 people have died, two are injured and one is reportedly missing.

The preliminary estimates suggest a loss of Rs 15,000 crore due to the damage on account of recent floods", Relief, Rehabilitation and Disaster Management Department, Secretary, Birjesh Pandey said on Tuesday.

The Centre has sent a five-member inter-ministerial team for an on-the-spot assessment of damage caused by the floods. At present, 53,356 people are staying in 369 relief camps as their houses either collapsed or washed away due to the floods. *—PTI*

Rains subside in Gujarat, flood situation persists

AHMEDABAD, 29 AUG

The situation in rain-battered Gujarat improved slightly on Thursday as the rainfall activity subsided, but Vadodara and some other parts of the state are still reeling under a floods due to overflowing rivers while the authorities continue the rescue and relief operations. IMD has given a warning of heavy rains in the coastal areas of Saurashtra and Kutch on Thursday. Rain-related incidents have claimed the lives of 29 people, the authorities said earlier. More than 18,000 people have been relocated and around 1,200 people rescued from flood-affected areas. *—PTI*

GOVT TELLS SC

Trans ID certificate is valid docu for PAN

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

The Centre has told the Supreme Court that a 'certificate of identity' issued by the district magistrate under the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 will be treated as valid documentation for applying for a PAN card.

A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Ahsanuddin Amanullah said the Union of India has in principle accepted this request and the Union government may consider incorporating it in the rules as well in order to bring clarity.

The top court was hearing a 2018 plea filed by a transgender alleging that her attempt to link her PAN with Aadhaar has failed as the PAN card has no 'third gender' option unlike the Aadhaar card.

Reshma Prasad, a social activist from Bihar, had sought a direction to the Centre to create a separate third gender category option on PAN cards to enable transgenders like her to link it with Aadhaar to get an "accurate identity proof".

PHOTO: PTI

Prasad had said she had enrolled for PAN in 2012 selecting the male gender identity category and has been getting the tax return of the year 2015-16 and 2016-2017 in the category of male. The Aadhaar system, she said, included the category of the third gender after an apex court verdict and she registered as a transgender in the Aadhaar. *—PTI*

India allies with US due to China threat: Ex-NSA

WASHINGTON, 29 AUG

- McMaster also described a meeting with Narendra Modi, where the Prime Minister expressed worries about China's military expansion and suggested a collaborative approach involving the US, India, Japan, and other allies to promote a "free and open Indo-Pacific".

The Indian government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is willing to engage in "unprecedented" levels of cooperation with the United States, mainly due to Chinese aggression, but at the same time is "fearful" both of "entrapment and abandonment", former US National Security Adviser Lt Gen (retd) HR McMaster has stated in his latest book.

Giving the firsthand account of his tenure during the Donald Trump administration as the National Security Advisor, McMaster in his book 'At War With Ourselves', that hit the bookstores this Tuesday, says he met his Indian counterpart Ajit K Doval a day before he was fired by Trump.

He met with Doval for dinner, who subtly expressed his concerns about the future of US-India collaboration. During their dinner at Fort McNair, Doval inquired about the longevity of their partnership, reflecting his apprehension about future US policies.

In their discussion, Doval and McMaster talked about the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan and the growing threat from nuclear-armed Pakistan. However, the primary focus was on China's assertive actions.

McMaster also described a meeting with Narendra Modi, where the Prime Minister expressed worries about China's military expansion and suggested a collaborative approach involving the US, India, Japan, and other allies to promote a "free and open Indo-Pacific," countering China's "One Belt One Road" initiative. *—PTI*

VESSEL TO FIGHT POLLUTION

A Rs 2,500-crore pollution control vessel built by Goa Shipyard Limited for the Indian Coast Guard was launched on Thursday by Union Minister Sanjay Seth in Vasco, Goa. The ship has been designed and constructed in-house by Goa Shipyard. It has a length of 114.5m, a breadth of 16.5m, weighs 4,170 tonnes and will absorb pollutants from oceanic water during ship accidents. It will be manned by 14 officers and 115 sailors *PHOTO: PTI*

FOURTH WOLF CAPTURED AS SCARE GRIPS UP

BAHRAICH, 29 AUG

A Forest Department team of Uttar Pradesh captured on Thursday a fully grown male wolf under its 'Operation Bhediya' launched to capture a pack of wolves on the prowl in Mehsi tehsil of Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh that has so far killed seven people.

The department has so far captured four wolves.

Drone cameras and thermal drone mapping techniques are being used by the forest department to catch the wolves. Permission to tranquillise the animals has been granted by the chief wildlife warden, according to an official statement.

As per the forest department, there is uncertainty about the total number of wolves in the area, officials said. *—PTI*

NIA searches 7 states in leak of defence secrets

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted searches at locations across seven states to probe the case of classified defence information leakage through a Pakistani espionage racket, according to an official statement issued on Thursday.

The premises searched on Wednesday by NIA teams were linked with suspects who had received money from Pakistan to undertake spying activities in India, it said.

"Extensive searches were conducted at 16 locations in Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Haryana in the case related to leakage of classified defence information through a Pakistani ISI espionage racket," the NIA statement said.

Twenty-two mobile phones and a host of sensitive documents were seized during the searches conducted by the NIA, which had in July 2023 taken over the instant case, originally registered in January 2021 by the counter-intelligence cell of Andhra Pradesh.

PHOTO: PTI

The case involved the leakage of sensitive vital information pertaining to the Indian Navy as part of an anti-India conspiracy hatched from across the border, the federal probe agency said.

The NIA had on 19 July, 2023, filed a chargesheet against two accused, including an absconding Pakistani national identified as Meer Balaj Khan.

Investigations revealed that Khan, along with arrested accused Akash Solanki, had been involved in the espionage racket, the NIA said. *—PTI*

HUGE CACHE OF ARMS RECOVERED IN MANIPUR

IMPHAL, 29 AUG

The Manipur Police conducted a search operation in Sekta Awang Leikai area in Imphal East district and recovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition, according to a statement.

Three INSAS rifles, two AK-56 rifles along with magazines, live ammunition and several other items, including military fatigues, were recovered during the operation on Wednesday, it said. The operation was conducted after some gunmen allegedly snatched three rifles and ammunition from police personnel in Leikinthabi area in Imphal West district on Monday. Four police personnel and one person were arrested and remanded to police custody for ten days, the police statement said. In a separate seizure, security forces recovered arms and ammunition from Wabagai Natekhong in Kakching and area domination activities in the fringe and vulnerable localities of hill and valley districts, it said. *—PTI*

'GOVT MUST JUSTIFY'

Why waive IPL dues but tax slum dwellers: HC to M'rashtra

MUMBAI, 29 AUG

The Bombay High Court on Thursday directed the Maharashtra government to justify its decision to reduce and waive the arrears from the organisers of IPL matches for police deployment, noting that it did not find any rationale behind the move.

"What is this? What are you (government) doing? This is a fee not tax. You will keep on increasing the water tax from slum dwellers and then you waive off the fee for such cricket matches. The BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) is the richest cricket association globally," A division bench of Chief Justice DK Upadhyaya and Justice Amit Borkar said.

The bench was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by activist Anil Galgali challenging the state's decision to reduce the rate for police protection provided to the Indian Premier League (IPL) T20 matches with a retrospective effect from 2011.

PHOTO: PTI

The plea said that the police were yet to recover arrears of Rs 14.82 crore from the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) for the IPL matches held from 2013 to 2018 at Wankhede and Brabourne stadiums.

As per two Government Resolutions issued in the years 2017 and 2018, the organisers had to pay around Rs 66 to 75 lakh per T20 and One-Day match and Rs 55 lakh for a Test match held in Mumbai's Wankhede and Brabourne stadium.

- As per two Government Resolutions issued in the years 2017 and 2018, the organisers had to pay around Rs 66 to 75 lakh per T20 and One-Day match and Rs 55 lakh for a Test match.

However, in June 2023, the government issued a new GR reducing the price for a T20 and One-Day match to Rs 25 lakh, the plea said.

Galgali in his plea said the GR had a retrospective effect from 2011 and thus it waived the arrears to be paid by the organisers. *—PTI*

AMID RAINS

United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) peacekeepers from India evacuate stranded people from an area following the unprecedented flooding of a channel along the White Nile River. Meanwhile, the death toll from heavy rains hitting 10 states in Sudan reached 138 ***PHOTO: ANI***

Will 2024 Assembly polls restore statehood in J&K

Jammu and Kashmir is set for a local election, the first to vote in their local administration since 2014, with the polling set to be held in three phases between 18 September and 1 October.

The Union Territory took part in the national polls this summer, with Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar saying people chose "ballots over bullets" and praising the 58 per cent turnout in June. While announcing the local poll schedule in Jammu and Kashmir, Kumar said he hopes for a similar response in the upcoming vote.

The Himalayan region, has been embroiled in violence since the start of armed insurgency there in 1989. Tens of thousands of people have been killed in the ensuing violence.

Jammu and Kashmir will vote in three phases between 18 September and 1 October ***PHOTO: ANI***

New Delhi still in control

During the last such election, Jammu and Kashmir were still considered a state. State governments were elected every six years, but the last one, the coalition of regional Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and BJP, did not last a full term — it was elected in 2014 and lost its majority in 2018.

Then, in 2019, the government revoked Jammu and Kashmir's semi-autonomous status and split the state into two federally administered territories.

This granted New Delhi much more direct control over the restive region that has struggled with an Islamist insurgency for decades.

And even after the local polls are done and the new administration is in place, its officials will still have to leave many key decisions about the region's economy and security to the national government in New Delhi and to its local representative, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha.

'We are determined to have statehood restored'

A spokesman for the PDP said that his party wants to see the region regain its status as one of India's states.

"This is not what we hoped for and want statehood restored. But at least we will have people's representation in the assembly and a voice for the people that has not been heard," PDP spokesperson Mohit Bhan said. The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, has already vowed to push for an India-Pakistan dialogue on Kashmir, introduce laws to protect jobs and land, and seek the release of political prisoners. "We are determined to have statehood restored. The government has already made this promise to the Supreme Court. If it does not restore statehood willingly, we will pursue justice through the court. With statehood, the government of Jammu and Kashmir will have the powers required to fulfill promises," the National Conference vice president, Omar Abdullah, told local media.

More deadly attacks in Jammu

The election revival is taking place amid an uptick in violence. On 8 July, five Indian army soldiers were killed and five others were injured in an ambush by militants on an army convoy in Kathua district. In June, at least nine people were killed and 33 injured when a bus carrying Hindu pilgrims plunged into a deep gorge after a militant attack in Reasi district.

Experts have noted that more and more violent incidents are reported in the Jammu region of Jammu and Kashmir In the first six months of 2024, 17 people were killed in Jammu, compared to 12 for the entirety of last year.

Praveen Dhonti, a senior analyst with the International Crisis Group, a global non-profit organization, said elections on its own would not be relevant unless New Delhi engaged in a meaningful political process to address growing alienation.

India-Pakistan conflict: A ticking time bomb

"They (legislators) will assert themselves and challenge any policy decisions that have not been debated in the assembly or recommended by the elected administration. The National Conference manifesto has promised to work for restoration of special status and full statehood. Even the pro-BJP Apni Party has sought full statehood," said Kumar.

Voters to send a signal for the future

Other analysts pointed out that, despite reduced legislative powers, local government should be viewed as a step towards greater political empowerment.

"The import of these elections does not lie in who will ultimately govern Jammu and Kashmir. It lies in the political signals it sends in terms of are people going to step out in big numbers to vote? Are they willing to be stakeholders in the democratic process?" Navnita Chadha Behera, a political scientist and Kashmir expert, said. "The significance of these elections can only be understood in the long term. It might offer a glimpse in what happens in next few years and not next few months," added Behera.

Courtesy, DW India

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR ساہ

Why is a universal basic income a necessity today?

The current cost-of-living crisis, high interest rates and the ensuing economic contraction have disproportionately hit low-income households. And for many low-income workers, the future remains uncertain.

On top of that, the rise of artificial intelligence may result in significant job redundancies and displacements. And recent employment data for New Zealand has been grim, with a rise in the number of unemployed.

The uncertain future of work in general has led many to propose some form of universal basic income (UBI) as a solution. The underlying idea is simple: everyone receives a basic income with no strings attached. Think of something like New Zealand superannuation, but for everyone.

Both the Green Party of New Zealand and the Opportunities Party have put forward a UBI as a practical response to the financial insecurities experienced by low-income households. Some commentators have described the UBI as inevitable.

As it turns out, a new study from the United States, funded by OpenAI's founder Sam Altman, provides insights into what can potentially be expected if the UBI becomes a reality.

Altman sees universal cash payments as a possible solution to the large-scale job displacements expected with AI-driven automation. However, the study's results were not necessarily what supporters of the scheme were hoping for.

As an unconditional cash transfer, a UBI scheme works differently from a means-tested benefits system (such as the Working for Families tax credit), which requires a family's economic condition to fall under specific criteria for eligibility. The UBI is for everyone.

Thus, the UBI can be a costly programme for a government, depending on the amount paid. A 2019 study calculated that a UBI at the jobseeker support level of NZ Dollar 215 per week would cost NZ Dollar 41.3 billion annually.

However, the government can also generate savings by slashing bureaucracy and replacing the welfare system with the UBI.

A number of countries have been exploring what a UBI might mean for them. Finland ran a two-year UBI pilot in 2017 and 2018. This aimed to understand whether an unconditional cash transfer encouraged uptake of low-paid or temporary work among the unemployed.

Two thousand randomly selected unemployed people received NZ Dollar 1,000 monthly. The study found positive wellbeing effects. The basic income recipients were found to be more satisfied with their lives and experienced less mental strain. The impact on employment was also positive but small.

In 2023, England started a two-year UBI trial. The scheme gives 30 people a monthly payment of NZ Dollars 3,500. The focus is on how the lump sum transfer affects the mental and physical health of the recipients. The first set of results are expected next year.

Altman's US-based study investigated how guaranteed minimum income affects low-income households' employment and earning prospects.

The study recruited participants from low-income households, aged between 21 and 40 as of 2019, in the states of Texas and Illinois.

The research group consisted of 1,000 randomly selected low-income adult individuals who unconditionally received USD 1,000 (NZ Dollars 1,700) per month for three years.

To put this amount in perspective, the cash transfer equalled, on average, a 40 per cent increase in household income. Compared with other such studies, both the amount and the duration are unprecedented.

Two thousand participants formed the control group, each receiving USD 50 (NZ Dollar 85) monthly.

Interestingly, the analysis revealed a 2 per cent drop in labour market participation by those receiving the cash transfer, and a reduction in the weekly number of hours worked by between 1.3 to 1.4 hours.

Similar effects were found for the participants' partners. The decline in labour market participation reduced individual income by USD 1,500 a year NZ dollars 2,500 relative to the control group.

In theory, the additional financial security for low-income households should enable individuals to spend more time productively.

This could include searching longer for a higher-quality or better-fitting job, starting training or education, building startups, or being productive in non-work activities such as caregiving. The findings suggest the negative labour market implications of UBI may depend on the duration and the generosity of the programme. A German newspaper summarised these findings as "disenchanting" for supporters of a UBI.

Given the most recent changes to the jobseeker benefit rules in New Zealand, which include benefit sanctions, it is unlikely the current government will consider a programme like a UBI.

—Courtesy, The Conversation

The research consisted of 1,000 randomly selected low-income adult individuals ***PHOTO: UNSPLASH***

Polio outbreaks still a major concern in many countries in 2024

Polio was eliminated from most parts of the world as part of a decadeslong effort by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and partners to wipe out the disease. But polio is one of the world's most infectious diseases and is still spreading in a small number of countries. The WHO and its partners want to eradicate polio in the next few years.

Until it is gone from the planet, the virus will continue to trigger outbreaks anywhere children are not fully vaccinated. The recent polio infection in an unvaccinated baby in Gaza is the first time the disease has been reported in the territory in more than 25 years.

What is polio?

Polio is an infection caused by a virus that mostly affects children under 5. Most people infected with polio don't have any symptoms, but it can cause fever, headaches, vomiting and stiffness of the spine. In severe cases, polio can invade the nervous system and cause paralysis within hours, according to the WHO. The UN agency estimates that 1 in 200 polio cases results in permanent paralysis, usually of the legs. Among children who are paralysed, up to 10 per cent die when their breathing muscles are paralysed.

The virus spreads from person to person, entering the body though the mouth. It is most often spread by contact with waste from an infected person or, less frequently, through contaminated water or food.

Just how bad was polio in the past?

Very bad. Polio has existed for centuries; ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics show children walking with canes, with the wasted limbs characteristic of polio victims.

Before the first vaccine was developed in the 1950s, polio was among the most feared diseases. An explosive 1916 outbreak in New York killed more than 2,000 people and the worst recorded US outbreak in 1952 killed more than 3,000. Many people who survived polio suffered lifelong consequences, including paralysis and deformed limbs. Some people whose breathing muscles were paralysed required "iron lung" chambers to help them breathe.

When did the eradication campaign begin?

WHO passed a resolution to eradicate polio in 1988, spurred on by the success of eliminating smallpox eight years earlier. Their original target was to wipe out polio by 2000. The WHO — along with partners including the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, UNICEF and Rotary International — boosted the production of an oral vaccine and rolled out widespread immunisation campaigns. Polio cases dropped by more than 99 per cent.

The recent polio infection in a baby in Gaza is the first time the disease has been reported in the territory in more than 25 years ***PHOTO: UNICEF***

Afghanistan and Pakistan are the only countries where the spread of polio has never been stopped. There are also outbreaks in more than a dozen other countries, mostly in Africa. WHO and partners now aim to wipe out polio by 2026.

Why has it taken so long?

It's extraordinarily difficult. Stopping polio outbreaks means vaccinating at least 95% of the population everywhere, including in conflict-ridden countries and poor regions with broken health systems and other priorities.

The oral vaccine is cheap, easy to use and is better at preventing entire populations from becoming infected. But it contains weakened, live polio virus and in very rare cases can spread and cause polio in unvaccinated people. In even rarer instances, the live virus from the vaccine can mutate into a new form capable of starting new outbreaks. Health authorities have become more successful in reducing the number of cases caused by the wild polio virus. Vaccine-related cases now cause the majority of infections worldwide. "The problem with trying to eradicate polio is that the need for perfection is so great and there are so many weak links," said Scott Barrett, a Columbia University professor who has studied polio eradication. "The technical feasibility is there, but we live in a vastly imperfect world."

—AP

- WHO passed a resolution to eradicate polio in 1988, spurred on by the success of eliminating smallpox eight years earlier. Their original target was to wipe out polio by 2000. Afghanistan and Pakistan are the countries where the spread has never been stopped

ISRAEL KILLS PROMINENT MILITANT IN WEST BANK

The military said another militant was arrested in Tulkarem

TULKAREM, 29 AUG

The Israeli military said it killed five more militants, including a local commander, early Thursday in the West Bank as it pressed ahead with what appeared to be the deadliest military operation in the occupied territory since the start of the war in Gaza.

Israel says the simultaneous raids across the northern West Bank — which have killed a total of 16 people, nearly all militants, since late Tuesday — are aimed at preventing attacks.

The Palestinians see them as a widening of the Israel-Hamas war aimed at perpetuating Israel's decades-long military rule over the territory.

The Islamic Jihad militant group confirmed that Mohammed Jaber, known as Abu Shujaa, was killed during a raid in the city of Tulkarem. He became a hero for many Palestinians earlier in the year when he was reported killed in an Israeli operation, only to make a surprise appearance at the funeral of other militants, where he was hoisted onto the shoulders of a cheering crowd.

Israel says it 'eliminated' local Palestinian commander in West Bank military operation *PHOTO: PTI*

The military said he was killed early Thursday along with four other militants in a shootout with Israeli forces after the five had hidden inside a mosque. It said Abu Shujaa was linked to numerous attacks on Israelis, including a deadly shooting in June, and was planning more.

The military said another militant was arrested in the operation in Tulkarem, and that a member of Israel's paramilitary Border Police was lightly wounded.

Israel launched a large-scale operation in the West Bank overnight into Wednesday. Hamas said 10 of its fighters were killed in different locations, and the Palestinian Health Ministry reported an 11th death, without saying whether he was a fighter or a civilian.

The overall toll of 16 killed in less than two days would make it the deadliest Israeli operation in the West Bank since Hamas' 7 October attack out of Gaza ignited the war there.

The Palestinian Health Ministry says over 650 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank since the start of the war. Most appear to have been militants killed in gunbattles during Israeli operations like the one this week, but civilian bystanders and rock-throwing protesters have also been killed, and the territory saw a surge of settler violence. Israel says the operations are required to prevent attacks on its citizens, which have also risen since the start of the war. *—AP*

'CHILD PORN'

Telegram CEO charged for alleged criminal use of app

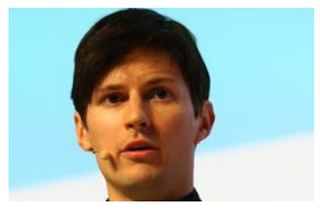
PARIS, 29 AUG

French authorities handed preliminary charges to Telegram CEO Pavel Durov on Wednesday for allowing alleged criminal activity on his messaging app, and barred him from leaving France pending further investigation.

The charges against Durov include complicity in the spread of sexual images of children and a litany of other alleged violations on the messaging app. The case has also called attention to the challenges of policing illegal activity online, and to the Russia-born Durov's own unusual biography and multiple passports.

Both free-speech advocates and authoritarian governments have spoken out in Durov's defence since his weekend arrest. Durov was detained on Saturday at Le Bourget airport outside Paris as part of a sweeping investigation opened earlier this year, and released earlier Wednesday after four days of questioning. Investigative judges filed preliminary charges Wednesday night and ordered him to pay 5 million euros bail and to report to a police station twice a week, according to a statement from the Paris prosecutor's office.

The first preliminary charge against him was for "complicity in managing an online platform to allow illicit transactions by an organised group", a crime that can lead to sentences of up to 10 years in prison and 500,000 euro fine, the prosecutor's office said.



Pavel Durov *PHOTO: X/@DUROV*

Durov released on €5M

- **Durov was arrested in France on 25 August**
- **He was accused of enabling child pornography, drug trafficking, fraud**
- **Released on €5M bail, must stay in France**

Preliminary charges under French law mean magistrates have strong reason to believe a crime was committed but allow more time for further investigation. David-Olivier Kaminski, a lawyer for Durov, was quoted by French media as saying "it's totally absurd to think that the person in charge of a social network could be implicated in criminal acts that don't concern him, directly or indirectly". *—AP*

S Korea battles surge of deepfake pornography

SEOUL, 29 AUG

South Korea's President, Yoon Suk Yeol, has ordered a crackdown on an epidemic of digital sex crimes targeting women and girls who become the unwitting victims of deepfake pornography.

Yoon's criticism of the use, recently reported in South Korean media, of the Telegram messaging app to create and share fake, sexually explicit images and videos came amid warnings that all women were potential victims.

Police will "aggressively" pursue people who make and spread the material in a seven-month campaign due to start on Wednesday, the Yonhap news agency said, with a focus on those who exploit children and teenagers. After a long struggle to stamp out molka – secretly filmed material of a sexual nature – South Korea is now battling a wave of deepfake images.

"Deepfake videos targeting unspecified individuals have been rapidly spreading through social media," Yoon told a cabinet meeting, according to his office. "Many victims are minors, and most perpetrators have also been identified as teenagers."

He called on authorities to "thoroughly investigate and address these digital sex crimes to eradicate them". According to the country's police agency, 297 cases of deepfake crimes of a sexual nature were reported in the first seven months of the year – up from 180 last year and nearly double the number in 2021, when data first began to be collated. Of the 178 people charged, 113 were teenagers.

—Courtesy, The Guardian

Gas leak in Iranian Guard Centre kills 1

DUBAI, 29 AUG

A gas leak caused the death of one person and injured 10 others at an Iranian Revolutionary Guard Centre, Iranian state television reported. The leak occurred at a workshop belonging to the Guard in Isfahan province and the injured people were transferred to a hospital for medical treatment, the report said. The report did not say how the people were injured or give other details. The gas leak happened while tensions have remained high since Hamas' top political leader, Ismail Haniyeh, was killed on 31 July in the Iranian capital. Iran accused Israel of the death of Haniyeh, but Israel has not taken responsibility for the assassination. Iranian top officials vowed to retaliate against Israel for the killing of Haniyeh. *—AP*

Stop colluding with Taiwan: Top Chinese Gen to US

BEIJING, 29 AUG

A top Chinese military officer, in a rare meeting with a visiting American official, demanded Thursday that the United States stop "collusion" with Taiwan, the self-governing island that China says must come under its rule. Gen. Zhang Youxia, one of two vice chairs of the Central Military Commission, told White House National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan that promoting what China calls the reunification of Taiwan with the mainland is "the mission and responsibility" of the military, according to a statement from China's Defence Ministry. Sullivan was wrapping up a three-day trip to China, his first as national security adviser and one aimed at maintaining communication to avoid differences over Taiwan and other issues from spiralling into conflict. *—AP*

Hong Kong court convicts 2 scribes in sedition case

HONG KONG, 29 AUG

A Hong Kong court convicted two former editors of a shuttered news outlet on Thursday, in a sedition case that is widely seen as a barometer for the future of media freedom in the city once hailed as a bastion of free press in Asia. Stand News former editor-in-chief Chung Pui-kuen and former acting editor-in-chief Patrick Lam were arrested in 2021 and previously pleaded not guilty to the charge of conspiracy to publish and reproduce seditious publications. Their sedition trial was Hong Kong's first involving media since the former British colony returned to Chinese rule in 1997. Stand News was one of the city's last media outlets that openly criticised the government amid a crackdown on dissent that followed massive pro-democracy protests in 2019. *—AP*

AMID TURMOIL

Ex-B'desh commerce minister, speaker held in murder case

DHAKA, 29 AUG

Former Bangladesh speaker Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury and ex-commerce minister Tipu Munshi have been arrested over the killing of a goldsmith during the recent quota reform protests that led to the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina-led government, media reports said on Thursday.

Munshi, 74, was arrested by the Rapid Action Battalion in Gulshan, Dhaka, on Wednesday night in the murder case filed in Rangpur, the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported. The case was filed against 17 people, including Munshi and former speaker of Parliament Chaudhury, for the killing of Muslim Uddin Milon, a 38-year-old goldsmith.

Besides, many unnamed people were accused in the case. Chaudhury, 46, served as the first female speaker of the Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad from April 2013 until August 2024. Milon was shot dead on 19 July in Rangpur during the student-led movement against a controversial quota system in government jobs, which later turned into a mass uprising that ousted 76-year-old Hasina's Awami League government on August 5, according to The Daily Star newspaper.

According to the case statement, when a clash broke out between students and Awami League activists during a protest in the City Bazaar area, police opened fire indiscriminately under the orders of the accused persons. *—PTI*

Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury *PHOTO: X/@KUNWARSV*

Take a relook at relations: BNP leader to India

A senior BNP leader has blamed an "ecosystem of former diplomats, bureaucrats, politicians, and think tanks" for creating a "bogeyman" to mislead the Indian establishment into believing that the relations would deteriorate without Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League. Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury of the Khalida Zia-led BNP said it is an "internal matter of country" . *—PTI*

Typhoon lashes Japan with torrential rain and strong winds

TOKYO, 29 AUG

A typhoon lashed southern Japan with torrential rain and strong winds Thursday, causing at least three deaths as it started a crawl up the length of the archipelago and raised concerns of flooding, landslides and extensive damage.

Typhoon Shanshan made landfall in the morning on the southern island of Kyushu and about 60 centimetres of rainfall had fallen in parts of Miyazaki prefecture, the Japan Meteorological Agency said. That 24-hour total was more than the August rainfall average and swollen rivers were threatening floods, it said. The typhoon was forecast to bring strong winds, high waves and significant rainfall to most of the country, particularly the southern prefectures of Kyushu. Around midday, Shanshan was moving north at 15 kph and its winds had weakened to 126 kph, JMA said.

More than a dozen people were injured in Miyazaki, many of them thrown to the ground. One each was also injured nearby Kumamoto and Kagoshima prefectures on their way to shelters, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency said.

Nearly a quarter million households were without power across Kyushu, most of them in the Kagoshima prefecture, the Kyushu Electric Power Co. said. Ahead of the typhoon's arrival, heavy rain caused a landslide that buried a house in the central city of Gamagori, killing three residents and injuring two others, according to the city's disaster management department. On the southern island of Amami, where the typhoon passed, one person was injured by being knocked down by a wind gust while riding a motorcycle, the FDMA said.

Weather and government officials are concerned about extensive damage as the typhoon slowly sweeps up the Japanese archipelago over the next few days, threatening floods and landslides. *—AP*

SHEPARD NS-26
A JOURNEY FOR SUBORBITAL SPACE TOURISM
The mission NS-26 is Blue Origin's second space tourism mission which will launch on Thursday night. This is company's 8th mission to carry passengers to space. The owner of the company is Jeff Bezos.
Ticket price:
₹3.78CR (appx)
CREW:
6 MEMBERS
Ephraim Rabin, Entrepreneur
Nicolina Elrick, Philanthropist & Entrepreneur
Eugene Grin, Businessman
Rob Ferl, University Professor
Karsen Kitchen, College Student
Dr Eiman Jahangir, Cardiologist
PURPOSE
It is aimed at making space tourism popular. A scientist Rob Ferl, who is part of the crew, will take plant sample during this mission to understand how plant genes react to the sudden changes in gravity experienced during spaceflight.
DESTINATION: Suborbital, which is situated 100 kilometres above earth's surface
Kitchen's flight will make her the youngest woman to ever cross the Karman Line, which is considered as the boundary where outer space begins.
LAUNCH VEHICLE
NEW SHEPARD NS-26
BLUE ORIGIN
LAUNCH SPACEPORT: Van Horn Texas, USA
18m Height
3.66m Diameter
Engine: Blue Engine 3
Propellants: LOX/LH2
Max Thrust: 490 kN

Pak to launch 2nd phase of Afghan refugee repatriation

ISLAMABAD, 29 AUG

- UN delegation led by Indrika Ratwatte, Naqvi said Pakistan has been hosting Afghan refugees for decades, and the phase-wise repatriation of illegal foreigners has already started

Pakis¬tan will launch the second phase of the repatriation of Afghan refugees, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has announced, emphasising the need for the role of the UN and the international community in their rehabilitation.

During a meeting on Wednesday with a UN delegation led by Special Representative for Afghanistan Indrika Ratwatte, Naqvi said Pakistan has been hosting Afghan refugees for decades, and the phase-wise repatriation of illegal foreigners has already started.

Naqvi, who welcomed the UN delegation at the Ministry of Interior, said the second phase of the repatriation of Afghan refugees will be started soon, according to a press release by the Interior Ministry. Pakistan launched the first round of repatriation of what it called "undocumented aliens" in November last year after a spike in suicide attacks, which the government believes were carried out by Afghan nationals. Islamabad also blamed them for smuggling, militant violence and other crimes.

In phase two of the repatriation plan, Afghans holding Afghan Citizen Cards (ACCs) will be expelled, while phase three is expected to target those with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)-issued Proof of Registration (PoR) cards, the Dawn newspaper reported. Disclosing that at least 44,000 Afghans approved for relocation to Western nations following the Taliban's return to power were still waiting in limbo in Pakistan, the Foreign Office had last month asked these countries to expedite the process. *—PTI*

TO CONTROL IMMIGRATION

Canada halts visitor work permits to address misuse

TORONTO, 29 AUG

The federal government has scrapped a Covid-era special measure that has been blamed for contributing to the surge of temporary residents in Canada and possibly asylum claimants at airports.

Starting immediately, the Immigration Department has ended the temporary public policy that allowed visitors to apply for work permits from within Canada, a measure to partly mitigate the financial hardship faced by visitors stuck in the country as a result of border closures and to partly fill labour shortages after the pandemic.

"IRCC is also aware that some bad actors were using the policy to mislead foreign nationals into working in Canada without authorization." Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government has been under tremendous public pressure to put a brake on the country's immigration growth amid a global affordability crisis and loosening domestic labour market.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

- Athe Immigration Department has ended the temporary public policy that allowed visitors to apply for work permits from within Canada, a measure to partly mitigate the financial hardship

During the pandemic, the government made a series of policy decisions to relax the rules on international students and migrant workers to ease the labour shortages across the country while opening the doors to displaced Ukrainians and Afghans on humanitarian grounds. These measures have contributed to the runaway growth of the temporary resident population to 2.8 million from just 1.4 million two years ago.

After the pandemic ended, critics said the special policy to issue work permits from within Canada had provided an incentive for some foreign nationals to come under the pretence of visiting but in fact pursuing job opportunities to remain in the country and ultimately a shot at permanent residence.

—Courtesy, Toronto Star

LET UKRAINE STRIKE DEEP INTO RUSSIA: EU TOP DIPLOMAT

BRUSSELS, 29 AUG

The European Union's top diplomat on Thursday ramped up pressure on Ukraine's international backers to lift restrictions on the use of weapons they provide the conflict-ravaged country to allow its armed forces to strike targets inside Russia. The US restricts the use of long-range ballistic missiles it provides to Ukraine and some EU members also limit the use of their weapons. Ukraine is desperate to target airfields and other military installations inside Russia that are used to stage attacks on its armed forces and civilians.

"We need to lift restrictions on the use of weaponry against Russian military targets, in accordance with international law," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said as the bloc's foreign ministers gathered in Brussels to discuss Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "Russia wants to bomb a European country into full capitulation," he said. *—AP*

Rupee rises 10 paise to close at 83.87 against USD

MUMBAI, 29 AUG

The Rupee appreciated 10 paise to close at 83.87 (provisional) against the American currency on Thursday, supported by easing crude oil prices and a firm trend in domestic equities. Forex traders said the market is awaiting cues from the US GDP and the US Personal Consumption Expenditure (PCE) inflation data, as this data point is crucial since it could sway the Federal Reserve's decision on whether to implement a 25 or 50 basis point rate cut at its September meeting. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.92 and touched an intra-day high of 83.84 against the US dollar. The domestic currency finally settled at 83.87 (provisional), 10 paise higher from its previous close. On Wednesday, the rupee depreciated 4 paise to close at 83.97 against the American currency. *—PTI*

Gold slips ₹100; silver plunges ₹600

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Gold prices slipped Rs 100 to Rs 74,250 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal had ended at Rs 74,350 per 10 grams in the previous trade. Silver prices also plunged by Rs 600 to Rs 87,200 per kilogram, extending the losses in the second straight session on Thursday from the previous close of Rs 87,800 per kg. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also declined Rs 100 to Rs 73,900 per 10 grams on Thursday. It had settled at Rs 74,000 per 10 grams in the previous trade. Traders attributed fall in the gold prices due to reduced demand by jewellers in the local markets. On the global front, comex gold is trading at USD 2,555.10 per ounce, higher by USD 17.30 per ounce or 0.68 per cent. *—PTI*

JSW bags 400 MW wind-solar hybrid project

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

JSW Energy on Thursday said its wholly-owned subsidiary JSW Neo Energy has secured an additional 400 MW wind-solar hybrid project from Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company (MSEDCL). Subsequent to this, the cumulative capacity allotted to JSW Neo under Phase- III (of MSEDCL) stood at 600 MW, a company statement said. According to the statement, JSW Neo Energy, a wholly-owned subsidiary of JSW Energy (company), has received Letter of Award (LoA) for an additional 400 MW of Wind-Solar Hybrid Power Project under greenshoe option from MSEDCL against MSEDCL – Phase III. The company, however, did not disclose any financial details. Following this capacity award, the total locked-in generation capacity of JSW Energy has increased to 17.6 GW. *—PTI*

Lupin launches generic cancer drug in US

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Drug firm Lupin on Thursday said it has launched a generic cancer treatment drug in the US market. The company said it has launched Doxorubicin Hydrochloride Liposome Injection single-dose vials in the US. The Mumbai-based drug maker introduced the product after its alliance partner, ForDoz Pharma Corporation, USA (ForDoz) received approval from the USFDA, Lupin said in a statement. The company's product is a generic version of Baxter Healthcare Corporation's Doxil which is indicated for the treatment of ovarian cancer, acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS)-related Kaposi's Sarcoma, and multiple myeloma. Lupin shares on Thursday ended 0.21 per cent at Rs 2,195.20 apiece on the BSE. *—PTI*

RIL to consider 1:1 bonus shares in Sept

RIL plans to be among the world's top 30 firms

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Reliance Industries announced that its Board of Directors will be meeting on 5 September, to consider a 1:1 bonus issue for its equity shareholder, the company informed the exchange in a filing on Thursday.

This means that for every share an investor holds, they may receive an additional share if the proposal is approved.

"We wish to inform you that pursuant to Regulation 29 and other applicable provisions of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 ("Listing Regulations"), a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Thursday, 5 September to consider and recommend to the shareholders for their approval, issue of bonus shares in the ratio of 1:1 to the Equity Shareholders of the Company by capitalization of reserves" said the company in the filing.

If the board approves this

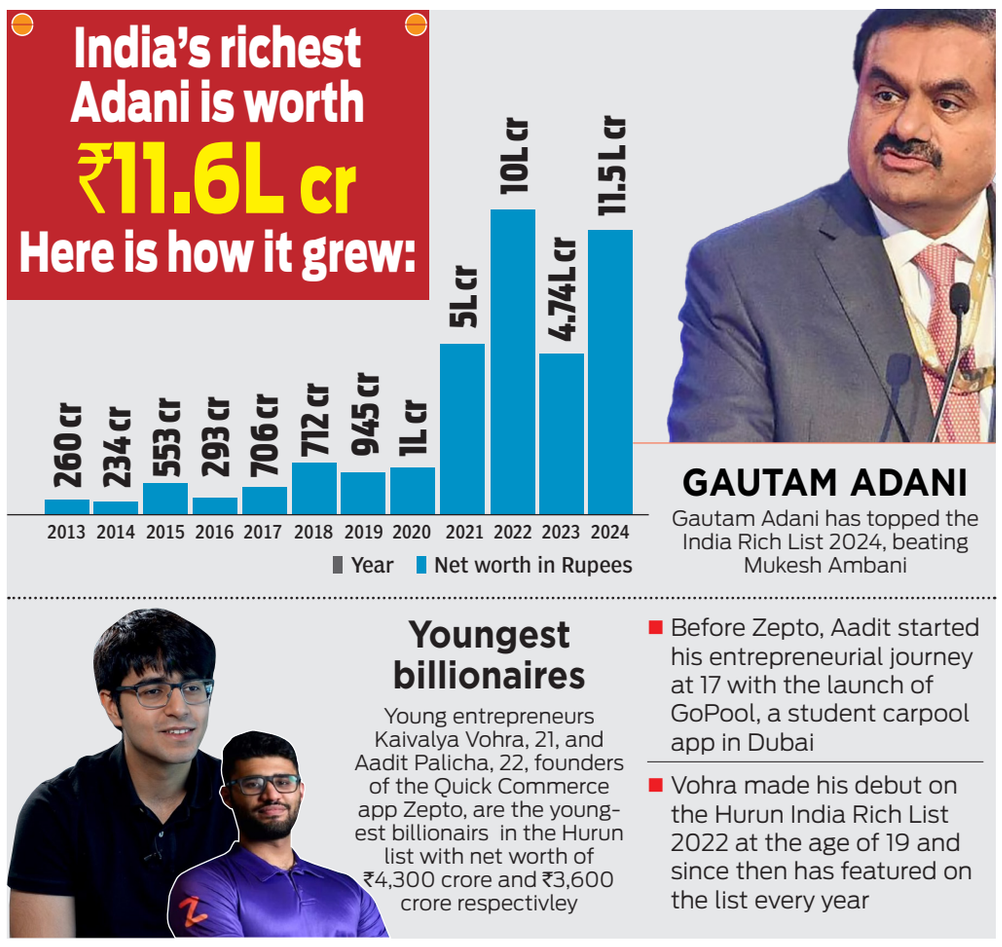
PHOTO: PTI

bonus issue, it will be funded by capitalizing the company's reserves. A 1:1 bonus issue is often seen as a way to reward existing shareholders by increasing the number of shares they hold, effectively doubling their shares without any additional cost. It can increase the liquidity of the shares in the market. Bonus issues can also reflect a company's confidence in its future prospects and a strong financial position, as it typically indicates that the company has sufficient reserves to distribute among shareholders.

Also, Reliance Indutries Limited (RIL) plans to be among the world's top 30 companies. *—PTI*

New offer: Jio users will get up to 100 GB of free cloud storage

Stepping up the company's AI and cloud play, Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani on Thursday announced that Jio users will get up to 100 GB of free cloud storage to securely store and access their photos, videos, documents, digital content and data. Akash Ambani introduced the JioPhonecall AI service, which will let users record and store any call in Jio Cloud. *—PTI*



GAUTAM ADANI

Gautam Adani has topped the India Rich List 2024, beating Mukesh Ambani

Youngest billionaires

Young entrepreneurs Kaivalya Vohra, 21, and Aadit Palicha, 22, founders of the Quick Commerce app Zepto, are the youngest billionairs in the Hurun list with net worth of ₹4,300 crore and ₹3,600 crore respectivley

- Before Zepto, Aadit started his entrepreneurial journey at 17 with the launch of GoPool, a student carpool app in Dubai
- Vohra made his debut on the Hurun India Rich List 2022 at the age of 19 and since then has featured on the list every year

Mukesh Ambani PHOTO: PTI

Jio is world's largest mobile data company: Mukesh

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

India is now the world's largest data market, and Jio has become the global mobile data company with its 490 million customers, using over 30 GB of data on an average per month, Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani said on Thursday. Speaking at the RIL's 47th annual general meeting, he said India is now the world's largest data market, with Jio lapping up about 8 per cent share in the global traffic and has surpassed major global operators.

"Thanks to Jio, India is now the world's largest data market. Today, Jio carries nearly 8 per cent of global mobile traffic, surpassing even major global operators, including those in the developed markets," Ambani said. He pointed out that Jio's customers are using over 30 GB of data per month on average.

"In eight years, Jio has grown to become the world's largest mobile data company," he added. *—PTI*

SHARES JUMPS BY 5%

Paytm's payments services arm receives govt nod

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Shares of fintech firm One97 Communications -- the owner of Paytm brand -- jumped 5 per cent on Thursday morning after the company received the government's approval for downstream investment in wholly-owned subsidiary Paytm Payments Services Ltd.

The stock climbed 5 per cent to Rs 565 on the BSE.

At the NSE, it surged 4.98 per cent to Rs 564.80.

The company will reapply for a payment aggregator (PA) licence, a regulatory filing said on Wednesday.

"We would like to inform you that PPSL has received approval from the government of India, Ministry of Finance, Department of Financial Services, vide its letter dated August 27, 2024, for downstream investment from the company into PPSL.

"With this approval in place, PPSL will proceed to resubmit its PA application. In the meantime, PPSL will continue to provide online payment aggregation services to existing partners," Paytm filing said.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had rejected Paytm's PA licence permit application in November 2022 and instructed the company to reapply with Press Note 3 compliance under the foreign direct investment norms.

As per Press Note 3, the government had made its prior approval mandatory for investments from nations that share land borders with India. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

- The stock climbed 5 per cent to Rs 565 on the BSE. At the NSE, it surged 4.98 per cent to Rs 564.80.The company will reapply for a payment aggregator (PA) licence, a regulatory filing said on Wednesday

The measures are aimed at enhancing investor protection and promoting market stability in derivative markets. PHOTO: ANI

SEBI mulls mandatory UPI block facility

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed mandating Qualified Stock Brokers (QSBs) to offer the facility of trading in the secondary market using the UPI-based block mechanism to their clients, similar to the Application Supported by Blocked Amount (ASBA)-facility.

In the UPI block mechanism, clients can trade in the secondary market based on blocked funds in their bank accounts, instead of transferring the funds upfront to the trading member.

The facility is currently optional for investors, and not mandatory for Trading Members (TMs) to offer as a service to clients.

ASBA-like facility already available for the primary market which ensures that money from an investor gets moved only when an allotment happens.

Meanwhile, SEBI has received suggestions from around 6,000 stakeholders on the consultation paper floated on Futures & Options (F&O) trading.

In its consultation paper floated in July, the regulator proposed seven measures, including increasing minimum contract size and upfront collection of option premiums, intra-day monitoring of position limits, rationalisation of strike prices, removal of calendar spread benefit on expiry day and increase in near contract expiry margin.

These measures are aimed at enhancing investor protection and promoting market stability in derivative markets.

Also, technology has validated faster processing of such enormous amounts of feedback.

Additionally, she said that SEBI is working on several dozen Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered technologies, which are aimed at improving surveillance and processing using AI. *—PTI*

Industry supports small & medium REIT Rules: Buch

MUMBAI, 29 AUG

SEBI Chief Madhabi Puri Buch on Thursday said there has been a positive response to small and medium REITs (real estate investment trusts) and industry players came forward for regulations on such entities.

SEBI implemented regulations for small and medium real estate investment trusts (SM REITs) aimed at significantly increasing investor interest in fractional ownership of real estate assets.

At the Global Fintech Fest 2024, Buch spoke about the role of the regulator and said that industry players came forward for regulations on small and medium REITs.

The remarks came days after the US short-seller Hindenburg Research alleged that recent amendments to SEBI's REIT Regulations 2014 were made to benefit a specific multinational financial conglomerate.

However, the markets regulator had stated that Sebi (REIT) Regulations, 2014 has been amended from time to time. Also, Hindenburg had raised questions about a potential conflict of interest involving Buch and private equity major Blackstone. Her husband Dhaval Buch is a senior advisor with Blackstone.

She said that the ultimate objective of Sebi is to create an ecosystem where compliance becomes second nature to market participants, akin to the effortless act of breathing. "Ultimate objective of Sebi is to ensure compliance becomes the low hum in the background, like breathing," Buch said. *—PTI*

Power project: SL gets 1st India payment

COLOMBO, 29 AUG

Indian High Commissioner Santosh Jha on Thursday handed over the first payment for the hybrid power projects on three Sri Lankan islands off northern Jaffna that are being implemented under Indian grant assistance of USD 11 million.

The projects to install a hybrid renewable energy system in the Delft, Nainativu and Analaitivu islands are being implemented under Indian grant assistance.

PHOTO: PTI

"HC @santjha handed over 1st payment for Hybrid Power Projects in Delft, Nainativu and Analaitivu islands to Secretary, Ministry of Power and Energy, Dr Sulakshana Jayawardena and Chairman, Sri Lanka Sustainable Energy Authority (SLSEA)," the Indian High Commission here said in a post on X.

It said the project is aimed at addressing the energy needs of the people of the three islands that are not connected to the national grid.

The Memorandum of Understanding for the project was signed in 2022. It replaced the Chinese venture initially awarded the contract following objections raised by India. *—PTI*

DGCA SUSPENDS PERMIT OF ALCHEMIST AVIATION

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Aviation watchdog DGCA has suspended the approval for Alchemist Aviation following an audit done in the wake of a fatal trainee aircraft accident that found the flying training organisation being non-compliant with regulations.

The move comes less than two weeks after the organisation's trainee aircraft was involved in the fatal accident that killed the two people on board -- instructor and trainee pilot. Following the accident, DGCA conducted a special audit. "During the audit, several serious deficiencies and non-compliances of regulatory provisions were found," DGCA said in a release on Thursday. *—PTI*

Adani Ent announces public issuance of secured NCDs

AHMEDABAD, 29 AUG

Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) the flagship company of the Adani Group on Thursday announced the public issuance of secured non-convertible debentures to raise up to Rs 800 crore.

The issue will open on 4 September and close on 17 September, with an option of early closure or extension, the company announced here during the launch of the NCDs.

The NCDs proposed to be issued have been rated "CARE A+; positive" by CARE Ratings Ltd.

Securities with these ratings are considered to have adequate degree of safety regarding timely servicing of financial obligations and such securities carry low credit risk, said Adani Group's Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Jugeshinder Robbie Singh, while addressing media here at the launch.

The minimum size for each application for NCDs will be Rs 10,000 across all series collectively and in multiples of Rs 1,000 thereafter. *—PTI*

Gautam Adani PHOTO: PTI

TO ENCOURAGE MANUFACTURERS

Repairability Index to tackle e-waste

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

India is planning a repairability index for mobile phones and electronic products to address the growing e-waste problem and encourage manufacturers to produce more easily repairable items, officials said on Thursday.

The Consumer Affairs Ministry is spearheading the initiative, which will provide a score on key parameters to inform consumers about the ease with which a product can be repaired, the officials said at a national workshop on the issue.

Addressing the workshop, Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare said: "As India emerges as the third largest economy in the world, we should have a vibrant and tech-savvy repair system."

She also added, "India can become a repair hub for the world."

The proposed index will be similar to initiatives in other countries, such as France's repairability index. It will rate products on criteria including availability of technical documents, ease of disassembly, spare parts availability and pricing.

The workshop was aimed at establishing a consensus among industry stakeholders on "key parameters for evaluating repairability index" besides promoting longevity in product design, and democratizing repair information to enhance consumer experiences in reusing the mobile. Additional Secretary Bharat Khera emphasized the need for transparent and affordable repair solutions, increased consumer awareness, and support for local repairers. *—PTI*

The proposed index will be similar to initiatives in other countries such as France's repairability index PHOTO: FREEPIK

Zomato gets ₹4.59cr tax demand notices

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Online food delivery platform Zomato has received GST tax demand orders of over Rs 4.59 crore, including applicable interest and penalty, from Tamil Nadu and West Bengal authorities.

The company said it plans to appeal against the demand orders passed by the Assistant Commissioner of GST and Central Excise, Nungambakkam Division, Tamil Nadu and Assistant Commissioner of Revenue, Government of West Bengal.

The Tamil Nadu tax authority passed an Adjudication Order under Section 73 of the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017, and Tamil Nadu Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017, for GST of Rs 81,16,518, with applicable interest (not quantified) and penalty of Rs 8,21,290. In a regulatory filing, Zomato said it has clarified in its response, along with relevant documents and judicial precedents, "which appears to not have been appreciated by the authorities while passing the order". *—PTI*

PHOTO: PIXABAY

PCB is concerned over Ihsanullah's injury recovery

KARACHI, 29 AUG

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is concerned over young fast bowler Ihsanullah's prolonged recovery from an elbow injury, which has persisted for a year. A reliable PCB source told PTI that senior officials are frustrated with Ihsanullah's recent behavior, particularly after he contradicted a statement made by his father. Ihsanullah's father visited Lahore a few weeks ago to meet with PCB officials, requesting that his son continue his rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) rather than in his hometown of Swat. He informed the media that Ihsanullah also preferred to continue his rehab at the NCA. However, the next day, the 21-year-old Ihsanullah tweeted that he was comfortable with continuing his rehabilitation in Swat and did not see the need to travel to Lahore, directly contradicting his father's statement. *—PTI*

Trippier retires from England soccer duty

LONDON, 29 AUG

Kieran Trippier announced his retirement from international soccer on Thursday after playing 54 times for England. The news came shortly before England interim coach Lee Carsley announced his first squad since taking over from Gareth Southgate, who left the post after losing the European Championship final to Spain last month. The 33-year-old Trippier, a defender for Newcastle, was one of Southgate's most trusted defenders in his eight-year tenure. The right back's most famous moment in an England jersey came at the 2018 World Cup where he curled in a free kick to give his team the lead against Croatia in the semi-finals. *—AP*

PHOTO: SACHIN

Sachin hails govt's decision to erect Achrekar's statue

MUMBAI, 29 AUG

Legendary cricketer Sachin Tendulkar on Thursday welcomed the Maharashtra government's decision to install a statue of his childhood coach Ramakant Achrekar at the iconic Shivaji Park here. The state's urban development department had on Wednesday approved the proposal for a six-feet statue of Achrekar near Gate No. 5 of the Shivaji Park. It was at the Shivaji Park that Tendulkar honed his skills to become one of the best batters the world has seen. "Achrekar Sir has had an immense impact on my life and several other lives. I am speaking on behalf of all his students," Tendulkar wrote on Instagram.*—PTI*

Rashid takes break from Test cricket to manage his back

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

Afghanistan cricket's poster boy Rashid Khan will not play the Test format in the near future to nurse his back after having undergone a surgery last year. A source in the Afghanistan Cricket Board told PTI that Rashid and the team management had decided mutually on his break from the longest format considering his back issues. Earlier this week, he was not named in the preliminary squad for the one-off Test against New Zealand in Greater Noida from September 9. Rashid was out of action for four months after undergoing a back surgery following the ODI World Cup in India in October-November. He was part of the more recent T20 Word Cup in the USA and Caribbean where he captained Afghanistan to the semifinals. The 25-year-old recently played three games in as many days in the Shpageeza T20 league in Kabul, taking six wickets in total. *—PTI*

Nitish-Thulasimathi duo makes winning start

The duo won the Group A contest 21-14, 21-17

PARIS, 29 AUG

India's Nitesh Kumar and Thulasimathi Murugesan had little difficulty overcoming country-mates Suhas Yathiraj and Palak Kohli in the opening group stage match of badminton mixed doubles (SL3-SU5) at the Paralympic Games here on Thursday.

However, mixed doubles duo of Sivarajan Solaimalai and Nithya Sre, seeded second, lost their SH6 group play stage match in straight games to the American pair of Miles Krajewski and Jayci Simon.

The Nitesh-Thulasimathi duo won the Group A contest 21-14, 21-17 in 31 minutes.

Nitesh, 29, who hails from Karnal district in Haryana, and young Thulasimathi, a veterinary science student from Tamil Nadu who had won the mixed bronze at the Asian Para Games in Hangzhou, encountered little challenge in the first game and at one stage they were leading by seven points.

Nitesh Kumar and Thulasimathi **PHOTO: PTI**

Unable to counter the pair's net play and deep tosses, Suhas and Palak quickly found themselves trailing, losing the game in just 14 minutes.

The second game too went on similar lines with Palak clearly not able to match the prowess of her senior partner on court and giving away points.

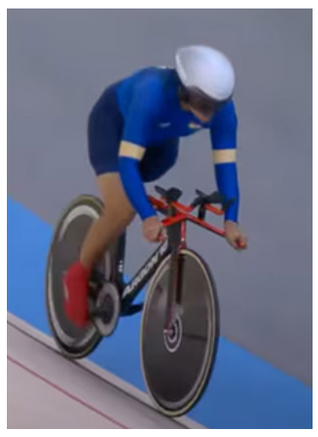
SL3 players have moderate impairment on one side of the body, affecting either both legs or the absence of limbs, while SU5 players have significant impairments in their upper limbs.

In Group B, Sivarajan and Nithya gave a tough challenge to the American pair before going down 21-23, 11-21 in 35 minutes in SH6 category. SH6 is for badminton players with short stature. *—PTI*

TANWAR LOSES TO TURKISH OPPONENT IN TAEKWONDO ROUND OF 16

PARIS, 29 AUG

India's Aruna Tanwar suffered a heavy 0-19 defeat to Nurcihan Ekinci of Turkey in a round of 16 contest in women's K 44-47kg category of the Paris Paralympics on Thursday. Aruna was absolutely no match to her opponent from Turkey who garnered points at will in the five-minute round. Ekinci scored two points from body kick nine times during the contest while the Indian also conceded one penalty point (gam-jeom). K44 category includes athletes who have impairments in one arm above the elbow. Para taekwondo was introduced during Tokyo Paralympics in 2021. Athletes will compete in five separate weight categories for each gender.In Para taekwondo, matches are held in a one round contest, lasting up to five minutes. *—PTI*



Jyoti Gaderiya **PHOTO: PTI**

Gaderiya finishes 10th in 3000m individual event

PARIS, 29 AUG

India's Jyoti Gaderiya bowed out of the women's C1-3 3000m individual pursuit cycling event after finishing 10th and last in the qualifying round of the Paris Olympics on Thursday.

Jyoti clocked 4 minute 53.929 second to complete the 3000m distance at 10th spot.

China's Wang Xiaomei (3:44.660) and Great Britain's Daphne Schrager (3:45.133) will contest for the gold after finishing first and second respectively in the qualifying round.

Germany's Maike Hausberger (3:49.444) and Switzerland's Flurina Rigling (3:50.347) will fight for the bronze after finishing third and fourth respectively.

The riders with the two fastest times will race for gold, while the next two fastest compete for bronze.

In para-cycling, athletes with cerebral palsy, limb impairments and amputations compete in five categories of C1 to C5. C1 athletes have the most severe limitation while those in C5 meet the minimum impairment criteria. *—PTI*

KEY EVENTS TODAY

BADMINTON

WOMEN'S SINGLES SL3 | 12 PM

Manasi Joshi, 35,
Gujarat

Won Bronze in Singles SL3 in the 2022 Asian Para Games at, China. Joshi had her leg amputated in 2011

WOMEN'S SINGLES SL4 | 4 PM

Palak Kohli, 22,
Punjab

Won Bronze in Singles SL3 in the 2022 Asian Para Games at, China. Joshi had her leg amputated in 2011

WOMEN'S SINGLES SU5 | 7.30 PM

T Murugesan, 22,
Tamil Nadu

Bagged 1 Gold, Silver and Bronze at Asian Para Games, 2023. She plays in SU5 category which is for players with movement affected at a low level in one arm, a high degree in the non-playing arm the absence of one limb, or the minor loss of one limb.

MEN'S SINGLES SL3 | 1.20PM, 2 PM

Manoj Sarkar, 33,
Uttarakhand

Has won 50 international medals with 19 gold medals, 13 silver medals & 18 bronze medals. He suffers from a lower limb condition due to wrongful medical treatment in childhood.

MEN'S SINGLES SL4 | 2.40 PM

Suhas Yathiraj, 41
Karnataka

Secured Silver in Badminton men's singles SL4. He suffers from ankle impairment.

Men's Singles SH6 | 8.10pm, 10.50pm

Solaimalai, 28,
Tamil Nadu

Won Bronze at Asian Para Games, 2022. He competes in the SH6 category, which is specifically designated for players of unusually short stature

Krishna Nagar, 25,
Rajasthan

Acquired Gold in 2021 Summer Paralympics. Nagar suffers from Dwarfism.

SHOOTING

WOMEN'S 10M AIR RIFLE STANDING SH1 | 12.30 PM

Avani Lekhara, 22,
Rajasthan

As of January 2023, Lekhara is ranked world no. 1 in Women's 10m Air Rifle standing SH1 (World Shooting Para Sports Rankings). A car accident when she was 11 years old led to complete paraplegia.

MEN'S 10M AIR PISTOL SH1 | 2.45 PM

Rudransh Khandelwal, 17, Rajasthan

Khandelwal achieved Silver at the Para Shooting World Cup in New Delhi in March 2024. He had lost his left leg in a fireworks accident when he was just 8 years old.

Manish Narwal, 17, Haryana

Narwal achieved Gold in the P4 mixed 50m pistol SH1 event at the Tokyo Paralympics. He has an impairment in his right hand.

ATHLETICS

WOMEN'S DISCUS THROW F55| 1.30 PM

Karamjyoti Dalal, 36, Haryana

Dalal got a bronze medal at the IPC World Para Athletics Championships 2017. She suffered a spinal injury after falling from a terrace in 2008, which left her with limited mobility in her lower limbs.

US Open: Djokovic reaches 3rd round

NEW YORK, 29 AUG

A U.S. Open match that Novak Djokovic already expected to be difficult was threatening to become a toss-up as he struggled with his serve.

Missing more than he made, Djokovic couldn't get many quick points Wednesday night. He acknowledged that he should have lost the second set, and if his opponent didn't get injured and have to stop, maybe he wouldn't even have won that match. Once he had, the defending champion was only looking ahead. "The matches are only going to get tougher from here. I know that, but I'm fine," Djokovic said. "I'll find my way, as I have done many times in my career."

Djokovic reached the third round when Laslo Djere had to retire with the No. 2 seed leading his Serbian countryman 6-4, 6-4, 2-0. Djere was leading

Novak Djokovic **PHOTO: PTI**

4-2 in the second set when he appeared to be troubled by pain near his hip and was visited by a trainer later in the set.

Plenty of tennis players at the US Open agree: Don't sleep on the benefits of a good nap, especially ahead of a night match.

Whether at a hotel or on one of the beds in the "Player Quiet Room" down the hall from the locker rooms or anywhere else they can find a spot to stretch out, these Grand Slam athletes appreciate the net gains offered by extra Zs during the tournament being played this week and next. *—AP*

ENGLAND REDUCED TO 97-3

LANKA MAKES PROMISING START TO SECOND TEST

LONDON, 29 AUG

Sri Lanka made a promising start to the second Test against England at Lord's by skittling out the home team's top order before lunch after winning the toss on a glorious day at the home of cricket on Thursday. England reached the end of the first session on 97 for three, with Joe Root (29 not out) and Harry Brook (9 not out) attempting to steady the innings after seeing two teammates throw away their wickets. While probing bowling by recalled pacer Lahiru Kumara accounted for Dan Lawrence nicking behind for 9, stand-in captain Ollie Pope and Ben Duckett will feel an element of regret after choosing the wrong shot when getting out.

Pope (1) got cramped up after opting to pull Asitha Fernando and misjudged his shot, which looped up into the hands of Dhananjaya de Silva running to square leg.

That made it 42 for two, and it was 82 for three when Duckett (40) top-edged a reverse sweep off the fourth ball of spinner Prabath Jayasuriya's first over and was caught near the boundary by Kumara. Sri Lanka's bowling attack offered more penetration than in the five-wicket loss to England in the opening Test in Manchester last week. *—AP*

Sri Lanka's Lahiru Kumara, left, celebrates taking the wicket of England's Ben Duckett during day one of the second Test cricket match between England and Sri Lanka, at Lord's, in London on Thursday **PHOTO: PTI**

Michael Zerafa **PHOTO: @MICHAEL_ZERAFA**

BOXER'S BROTHER THROWS PUNCH AT RIVAL TRAINER

SYDNEY, 29 AUG

The brother of a boxer who had just been awarded a technical knockout punched the trainer of a rival fighter during a chaotic melee in the ring following a televised bout at the Sydney Arena.

Michael Zerafa received the TKO win on Wednesday night after his opponent Tommy Browne quit after the first round of the catchweight bout due to a biceps injury.

Zerafa wasn't happy with his rival retiring, and appeared to yell "you quit" when Browne remained on his stool after the second round was set to start.

That triggered a heated argument between Zerafa and Browne's trainer, Tommy Mercuri.

"He will be barred from attending all No Limit Boxing events in future," the promoters said in a statement, adding that the provincial Combat Sports Authority of New South Wales "have been informed of the decision ahead of any additional disciplinary action they may elect to proceed with."

Australian Associated Press reported that state police had started an investigation. *—AP*

Sharuk Khan breaks U20 NR in 3000m steeplechase

LIMA, 29 AUG

India's Sharuk Khan broke the national U20 record in 3000m steeplechase to qualify for the final with a sixth-place finish in his heat race at the World Athletics U20 Championships here.

The 18-year-old Khan ran 8 minute 45.12 second to finish sixth in heat one late Wednesday night and qualify for the final to be held on August 31.

First eight finishers in each of the two heat races qualify for the final.

The earlier national U20 record in this event was in the name of 19-year-old Rajesh of Rajasthan who had clocked 8:50.12sec while finishing fourth at the Federation Cup National Senior Championships in May in Bhubaneswar. *—PTI*

Shaheen dropped after 1st test defeat

RAWALPINDI, 29 AUG

After facing criticism for heavy defeat in the series-opener, Pakistan on Thursday dropped left-arm fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi from the must-win second Test against Bangladesh, a move which is being seen as beginning of the changes required to make Pakistan cricket better.

Pakistan's team combination, in which they fielded four pacers, also invited sharp criticism from former players, who felt that playing with two spinners was a better option.

Shaheen Shah Afridi **PHOTO: X**

Head coach Jason Gillispie said Shaheen understands the "situation" and the break will give him quality time with his family. "We had a good conversation with him, and he fully understands we are looking at the best combination for this game, and the last few weeks have been interesting for him with fatherhood and other things" Gillispie said during the pre-match press conference. The former Australian pacer said Shaheen is working with Azhar Mahmood to be more effective, and the management certainly wants to see him at his very best as there is a lot of cricket coming up. *—PTI*

MISSING DOCU CASE

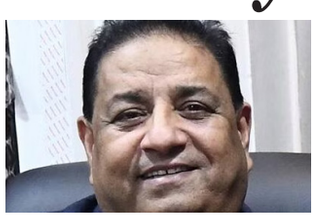
AICF mulls disciplinary action against its ex-secy Chauhan

CHENNAI, 29 AUG

The All India Chess Federation is mulling disciplinary action against its former secretary and current FIDE advisory board member Bharat Singh Chauhan after he denied the existence of any allegedly missing documents linked to his tenure.

On Wednesday, the AICF sent out a notice to all its members about its upcoming Special General Body Meeting to be held on September 12.

Among the discussion points in the SGM would be to "take necessary action with regard to the disciplinary proceedings initiated against Mr Bharat Singh, Mr Naresh Sharma, Dr Vipnesh Bhardwaj and Mr AK Verma by the General Body of AICF".



Bharat Singh Chauhan **PHOTO: AICF.IN**

Chauhan, currently also the President of the Delhi Chess Association, was issued a show cause notice on August 5 and asked to submit some of the documents allegedly missing from his tenure as the AICF Secretary, which ended in 2022.

However, Chauhan has categorically denied that any documents pertaining to AICF's operations during his tenure were missing in his reply to the show cause notice. A similar denial has been issued by Verma. *—PTI*

Bihar's Rajgir to host 8th Women's Asian Champions Trophy

NEW DELHI, 29 AUG

The next edition of the Women's Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament will be hosted in the ancient city of Rajgir in Bihar from November 11-20, the sport's apex body in the country said on Thursday.

The event will be a joint venture between Hockey India and the Bihar government, and will be held at the newly-developed Rajgir Hockey Stadium.

Last year, Hockey Jharkhand successfully hosted the Women's Asian Champions Trophy in Ranchi, where hosts India clinched the title.

Besides defending champions India, reigning Olympic silver medallists China, Japan, Korea, Malaysia and Thailand are expected to participate in the tournament.

The event will be a joint venture between Hockey India and the Bihar government **PHOTO: PTI**

Extending a warm welcome to the teams set to participate in the continental event, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said, "I am very happy and delighted to extend the support of Bihar Government to host the 8th Women's Asian Champions Trophy. We extend a very warm welcome to the international teams participating in the prestigious event.

"We hope the hockey teams, officials and hockey fans travelling for this event will enjoy the hospitality of our people, we will ensure no stone is left unturned in making this event a grand success." *—PTI*